

**MORGANTON FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
IN SERVICE TO GOD AND COUNTRY  
1879-1990  
“EVERY MEMBER A MINISTER”**



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# **A History of First Baptist Church Morganton, North Carolina**

**1879-1990**

by  
**W. Stanley Moore**  
and  
**Samuel W. Freeman**

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## Foreword

This essay is an attempt to make a record of the history of the First Baptist Church of Morganton, North Carolina which was founded in the year 1879 as the Morganton Baptist Church. This is being done in response to a letter from Mr. Carlton T. Mitchell, Chairman of the Historical Committee of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention. This is being done under category 2 which permits the use of histories of local churches and church organizations and associations, including revised editions of prior histories. This history is being done in two segments and thus covers the history from the founding date of 1879 through the year 1990.

The first segment is a detailed and well done and carefully researched one by Mr. W. Stanley Moore who was a Deacon in our church and a professional writer, Editor-in-Chief of the Morganton News Herald. With access to the well preserved files of the Herald Mr. Moore had a wonderful source of good information. He had the fine assistance of Mrs. Clifford Walker, nee Elizabeth Walton, whose grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Marcus Brittain were included among the eight known founders of the church. This segment is as it was written in 1972 with the addition of an appendix listing significant names of persons in the Church Family on the occasion of the Centennial celebration in 1979, and with an introductory passage appropriate for the centennial occasion.

The second segment is made up of material gleaned from several of the continuing records of church affairs including the annual directory, minutes of deacons meetings, and annual reports of the Church to the Catawba River Baptist Association. The most valuable source of material for this segment was a carefully maintained file of bound copies of the weekly newspaper Church Week. The terms of three of the most recent pastors to serve the church are included in this segment. Mr. Moore's segment covered a part of Mr. Benfield's tenure. The second segment deals mainly with the latter days of Mr. Benfield's time with us. Mr. Guerry's eight years 1973-81 and Mr. Bob Shepherd's tenure from 1982 until the present date, the close of the year 1990, are covered completely. During the interval between Mr. Guerry's resignation and the arrival of Mr. Bob Shepherd we were served by a number of interim ministers, including retired Pastor Benfield.

During the combined terms of Mr. Guerry and Mr. Shepherd, about 17 years, we have been much impressed by both men's use of the Church Week as a means of communication from pastor to the church family. By this means, the church is well informed in matters that relate to the ongoing of the church. The pastors have used this fine means of communication to inform the church of coming events, to announce policy changes, to praise departments and persons who merit special attention, and to welcome visitors. This outreach was often in form of sermonettes on a variety of subjects worthy of attention. And the pages have been shared with other staff people who may need to be heard. This has been a very valuable means of keeping persons unable to attend to be informed of the progress of the church. Finally, both of them along with Mr. Benfield have been excellent pastors and have served notably in their leadership roles.

I wish to thank Pastor Shepherd for his counsel and guidance in this project. And, I am grateful to secretaries Cathy Rudicill and Barbara Lambert for their patient help in making available to me precious church records for use in the project.

Sam W. Freeman, Historian  
First Baptist Church  
May, 1991

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## W. Stanley Moore

The author of the first segment of the Baptist Church history was Mr. W. Stanley Moore. This thorough sketch was done by Mr. H. Eugene Willard, General Manager of the News Herald who knew Mr. Moore very well. We asked him to remind the old timers of this great man, who was Stanley, and to introduce him to the many newcomers in our fellowship. He has done exceedingly well.

William Stanley Moore, who wrote the history of the First Baptist Church for its Centennial celebration in 1979, was more than just an author and historian. He was an exacting wordsmith, a dedicated churchman, and an eloquent keeper of the truth in this community.

As editor of The News Herald for 25 years, he was a vigorous crusader, a champion of equality, and an influential advocate for education, quality health care, and human relations.

Stanley Moore was born in Lenoir in 1909, but moved to Statesville where he was graduated from Statesville High School in 1927. He attended the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill and worked for a securities company in New York during the stock market crash of 1929.

After a short stint as a reporter for the Statesville Record, he joined The New Herald in 1934 where he served as News Editor until 1945. After a brief period as assistant business manager at Broughton Hospital and administrator of Grace Hospital, he returned to The News Herald as editor, a position he held from 1952 until his retirement in 1977.

Until his death in 1981, Stanley Moore served Morganton and Burke County in a variety of leadership roles that included service on the Burke County Board of Education, Grace Hospital Board of Trustees and the Burke County Chamber of Commerce, of which he was president.

He also served as president of the Morganton Kiwanis Club, chairman of the Burke County Chapter of the American Red Cross and president of the Burke County Historical Society.

In 1960, he was named Morganton's Man of the Year for his service to the community, and in 1977, he received the Human Relations Award from the Burke County Chapter of the NAACP.

He was one of the founders of Western Piedmont Community College and served as a trustee from the college's chartering in 1964 until his death, including eight years as chairman of the board. In 1979, the college designated one of its first two named buildings the W. Stanley Moore Administration Building.

Professionally, he was a director and secretary of The News Herald Publishing Company, a member of the American Society of Newspaper Editors and chairman of the Western North Carolina Press Association.

He was an active member of the First Baptist Church and served not only as church historian, but also as a deacon at various intervals over the years. He also taught the Huffman Bible Class, founded by the late Robert O. Huffman, for 12 years.

His thorough and detailed accounting of the development of the Baptist community in Burke County and the founding of the Morganton Baptist Church (now First Baptist Church) with just 12 members in 1879, is a testament not only to his dedication to the task of writing the church history, but also to his own faith in God and his compassion for his fellowman.

Widely known for his sense of humor and his penchant for storytelling, Stanley Moore took pleasure in announcing he was "not a good Baptist: That's redundant and an unnecessary use of the adjective 'good.' I'm a Baptist," he would say.



# **First Baptist Church History Morganton, NC**

By W. Stanley Moore, Church Historian  
For the Church Centennial, October 1979

January 9, 1972, will be recorded as one of the major dates in the history of the church during its pre-Centennial decade and, in fact, a red-letter day in the century of remarkable happenings.

On that day the congregation celebrated the payment of all indebtedness on its magnificent new home. A special ceremony was held to signalize the closing out of a Building Fund that had channelled \$1,250,000 into a modern facility built to the glory of God and to the greater service of His people.

The building program, a dream of long standing, took its first step toward fulfillment in 1953 with the acquisition of a site against the day when a new church could be built. Additional land was acquired in 1962, construction was started in late 1964, and the first service was held in the new sanctuary June 18, 1967.

Thus the retirement of indebtedness on the third home in its history came less than five years after the church plant was completed and less than three years after the church had celebrated its 90th anniversary.

It has been a relatively short history in the light of the community's existence but it has been a dynamic one, characterized by a dedication to God.

Actually, the Baptist faith was a long time in coming to Morganton.

In 1879 when the Morganton Baptist Church was organized (later to become the First Baptist Church), the community had been in existence almost a century. Other denominations were well established in the village.

These earlier churches were established with some difficulty in this pioneer settlement. The town had been authorized in 1778 as the county seat of the County of Burke which was created in 1777. A survey with the location of a few streets was completed in 1784 - ninety-five years before the founding of this church.

The lower segment of the pioneer population was described by a recent historian in this way: "...The people were non-conformist in every particular. They resented any and all efforts by either state or church to mould their lives and bitterly hated the agents and trappings of authority. The gown of a priest and the uniform of an officer alike were abhorrent..."

The religious flavor of early Morganton was predominantly Presbyterian, and the First Presbyterian Church is Morganton's oldest congregation. There was Presbyterian activity prior to 1797 but there is no record of an organized church with a regular pastor until 1824. The church used by the Presbyterians was constructed in part with funds received from the sale of lots in the new county seat, as provided under an act of the N. C. General Assembly.

This made the church building a public place of worship because of the use of public funds. There were some Methodist services conducted there also, for there was a considerable sprinkling of Methodists in the community, partially due to the influence of Bishop Francis Asbury who visited or passed through Burke on eight different occasions between 1786 and 1814. Bishop Asbury is known to have preached only once in Morganton itself, and that was in 1793 when he delivered a sermon at the "Burke Court House."

(The story is part of Methodist history that Bishop Asbury held a meeting in the Spring of 1796 at what was called "Lovely Ford, East of Morganton," and on that occasion, it was reported: "There were eight preachers present and he had arranged to hold Holy Communion; but upon discovering that the good brothers had substituted brandy for the sacramental wine, he refused to proceed with the ordinance." It can be seen that early Morganton was not quite ready for a vigorous Baptist faith.)

The history of the First Methodist Church began in 1846 when the Methodist group purchased property for a building of its own on King street.

It was in the same year - 1846 - that efforts were started toward the building of an Episcopal



house of worship after Grace Church was admitted to the Diocese in 1845. A frame building was completed in 1847.

Thus it is known that there were at least three churches well established in Morganton before the Civil War. Wheeler's History of North Carolina, published in 1851, has this note about the community: "Morganton is a beautiful, healthful and flourishing village, containing several churches, a handsome court house, and other public buildings; a branch of the Bank of the State of North Carolina, several stores, public houses, and handsome private residences."

But even other denominations gained a foothold in rural Burke County before being established in Morganton. Quaker Meadows Presbyterian Church predates the First Presbyterian Church. An old Gilboa Methodist Church was formed before the First United Methodist Church in Morganton.

The Baptist faith also was well established in rural Burke County before it gained a foothold in Morganton. Students of Baptist history say that this is typical inasmuch as the early Baptists in the new nation often responded to the old brush-arbor, circuit-riding, campmeeting type of service which has a special appeal to rural residents. One Baptist minister who is a keen student of Baptist development said he remembers from early boyhood when Baptists often rivalled the "shouting Methodists" in the intensity and emotional response to divine worship.

Because of the independent, autonomous nature of Baptist churches, early Baptists had to find their way rather slowly into a fairly stable pattern of faith and worship and they did so by trying and discarding certain procedures and practices. Records of some of the early Baptist churches in Burke County show that footwashing was engaged in on occasion. And it is known that the Catawba River Baptist Association distributed a circular letter dealing with the subject of footwashing which was to be discussed at the 1840 annual meeting. Associational records show that "this created much discussion and objection. It was rejected in a final vote of 27 to 21."

In this process of arriving at a firm faith and an acceptable form of worship, there began to develop a crystallization from the separation of the so-called Missionary Baptists from the Primitive or "Hardshell" Baptist approach. It is difficult for this generation to comprehend that Baptists could be anything other than missionary-minded or to imagine that there ever was a segment, even in our own general area, who were classified as primitive Baptists because they opposed missions and education and any progressive growth in the worship of Almighty God.

Baptist development approached Burke County from at least two directions, following a pattern of growth along major streams of waterways. One of the earliest churches - and certainly one of the most influential - was North Catawba Baptist Church, in the Northeast edge of Burke County near the Caldwell line. Developing out of a movement coming up the Yadkin River, North Catawba Church was organized about 1795 with the help of the Head of the Yadkin Church, which is now the Yadkin Baptist Church in Caldwell County.

Probably the first church organized by Baptists in what is now Burke County is the Silver Creek Church, formed about 1800. This grew out of the so-called Charleston movement reaching out through the Broad River Association when churches east of the Blue Ridge withdrew to form their own group. At its founding in 1827, the association consisted of 13 churches with 579 members covering ten counties.

Silver Creek Church became the mother church of Smyrna Church, formed about 1804, established first on Linville River and later moved to Upper Creek. The present Smyrna Church occupies a frame building on N.C. 181 at what is known as Optimist Park or Clearwater Beach.

After the formation of these three early churches - North Catawba, Silver Creek and Smyrna - there was a lapse of almost a half-century before other churches were formed in what is now Burke County.

Zion Church, an outgrowth of Smyrna, was organized in 1854, Enon Church in 1855 and Pleasant Hill in 1858. No other churches were formed until after the Civil War. Then came Hopewell in 1871 and Mount Home in 1873 and Oak Grove in 1879.

This would mean that nine Baptist churches were in operation when the Morganton Baptist Church had its modest beginning. Others were to follow: Antioch in 1881 and Mount Olive in 1882. No others were to enter the association until the 20th Century. This means that of the 53 churches

in the Catawba River Association today (1979) 41 were organized since 1900.

With all of the Baptist activity in rural Burke County, Baptists were scarce in Morganton. In 1875 there was reported to have been only one Baptist in the Community of Morganton.

In the purview of history, the Baptist movement has a resemblance to a military campaign, as if the rural churches were siege battalions surrounding the town target until they could penetrate the walls. Actually, the development was a product of a strong faith on the part of a few Baptists who moved to Morganton from rural folds and from Baptists living close to Morganton.

There is no record as to what date in 1879 the Baptists organized their first church in Morganton with a mere dozen members. In some places the church is referred to as having eleven charter members. But this was a going church when the 1879 session of the Catawba River Association was held. The new Morganton Baptist Church reported a membership of 12. Certainly the charter membership - being the first membership reported to the Association - would be fixed at 12, and it is now so accepted.

Unfortunately there is no complete list of charter members, although the Committee on Church History hopes to learn more names than it now has.

The charter members whose names are known number eight or nine, depending on whether the supply pastor was a member or not.

Here are eight known charter members: Marcus D. Brittain, his wife, Mrs. Minerva Hawkins Brittain, and their daughter, Miss Sarah Elizabeth Brittain, all former members of Mount Home Baptist Church; Miles Pinkney Hildebrand, also a former member of Mount Home; Julius Alexander Cox and his wife, Mrs. Phoebe Elizabeth Shull Cox, former members of Smyrna Baptist Church; Ephraim S. Whisnant and his, Mrs. Louise Benfield Whisnant, former members of Zion Baptist Church.

The supply pastor, Rev. J. R. Jones, would make the ninth charter member.

At the Associational meeting of 1879, this new church was represented by Elder J. R. Jones, M. D. Brittain and W. E. Whisnant, the church clerk. The new Morganton Church was listed as contributing \$5 to the work of the Committee on Destitution and Association Missions. This was a matter of throwing bread on the water, for this new church owed much to the Association.

There was no sweeping increase in membership during its early years. In fact, at the associational meeting in 1880, held at Marion, the Morganton church reported receiving two new members by letter since the preceding annual report, bringing the total membership to 14. Messengers or delegates to that second associational meeting include Hampton Williams along with M. D. Brittain and E. S. Whisnant.

The Association in 1880 demonstrated its interest in the new church in Morganton by two actions. The Association paid \$50 to Rev. J. R. Jones for preaching at Morganton in 1880. Another entry told of an unusual step: "It was moved that a collection be taken at every Union Meeting and proceeds to be applied to the Morganton church, which was adopted."

This practice by the Catawba River Association of providing remuneration for the supply pastor continued for several years.

How well this First Baptist Church repaid this help from the Catawba River Baptist Association is a matter that the records will show through the years past and the years ahead.

The first house of worship of the Morganton Baptist Church was a frame structure on North Sterling Street, near the corner formerly occupied by Northwestern Bank. This frame church stood south of the Queen Street intersection and the W. F. Davis real estate office and the spot where a fresh air market stood for years.

In this modest building, built in hope some 10 years earlier, painted white and with a steeple, the Baptist faith was nurtured, slowly but persistently and with a growing faith in the Providence of the Almighty. In 1889 - ten years after the church was organized - preaching was held two Sundays a month for a membership of 51. Preaching services twice a month came as evidence of progress beyond the once-a-month pattern. By 1893 the membership had grown to 80, and it was noted in the minutes of the association that the church had "preaching in the evening," which was another mark of growth.



Soon thereafter, on December 13, 1893, at 2 a.m. a disastrous fire wiped out much of what was then Morganton's business district, including the church building, along with most of its early records.

The Morganton Herald announced "Morganton had the most serious battle with the fire fiend Tuesday night she has ever fought." Eight stores, a church and a hotel were burned, with total loss estimated at \$40,000. The Baptist church was described as "a large frame building," but older residents who have childhood recollections of the fire dismiss the description and indicate that it wasn't really a large building. The Herald obtained what it called "a rough estimate of the loss" furnished by one of the merchants. The Baptist Church was identified as one of 17 property owners, with the church's loss estimated at \$2,000. There was no insurance. The writeup the next day said "There were several frame buildings near the corner (the square) and for this reason insurance rates were so high that most of the property was not insured." Insurance altogether for other property owners amounted to \$8,100, or slightly over 20 per cent of the total loss.

The loss of their house of worship would have been a severe setback to group less spiritually hardy. But the Baptists may have missed one regular worship but not more.

The congregation at that time had grown to 80. Of this congregation there were 27 males and 53 females. Such a small group could have been easily dismayed at the prospect of continuing, but the disastrous fire reminds of the fabled and miraculous Phoenix bird which rose in freshness and youth out of the ashes which destroyed it. For the fire of 1893 marked a new era for the First Baptist Church, partly because of the challenge it presented and partly because of the lay leadership and the inspiring leadership of the pastor, the Rev. Robert Logan Patton.

Eight days after the fire (Thursday, Dec. 21, 1893), the pastor, Mr. Patton, issued a notice to the congregation:

"The pastor and members of the Presbyterian Church offered us the use of their house half the time - every other Sunday or every Sunday night. The pastor of the Methodist Church made in substance the same offer. Our Episcopal brethren have given us the use of Town Hall every Sunday in a way that does not conflict with their services."

"In behalf of the Baptist Church, I hereby extend to our brethren in Christ our most hearty thanks for their extreme kindness and Christian consideration."

"Our services will be in the Town Hall, Sunday School at 9 a.m., preaching at 7 p.m. and prayer meeting Thursday night."

"Subject next Sunday night - 'Degrees in Heaven.' The public are invited to all services."  
(Signed) R. L. Patton.

Incidentally, the Episcopalians had torn down their former frame building to erect on the same site of the present Grace Church. Elsewhere, it is noted that the Baptists paid a monthly rental of \$1.25 for the use of the Town Hall.

In October 1894, the church began holding services in the Burke County Court House, enabling the congregation to continue the practice of holding weekly services. In fact, the Catawba River Association's minutes for its 1894 meeting (held less than a year after the fire) noted that the Morganton church was the only one in the association holding services every Sunday. Membership was 118 in 1894 - an increase of 47.5 per cent for a year in which fire destroyed the house of worship.

The small Baptist congregation must have resolved before the embers had cooled from the disastrous fire that they would have a new and better church. This dream was realized with the completion of a handsome brick building on South King Street at the corner of Meeting Street. The building was started some time in 1894 and was completed and formally occupied July 14, 1895. A Mr. Sims of Raleigh delivered the dedication sermon, and the moderator for the ceremony was Rev. William Rufus Bradshaw of Moravian Falls, then associated with the State Baptist Board and later to become pastor of the First Baptist Church of Morganton.

Rev. Mr. Patton, the pastor, was said to have mortgaged his home on Saturday, the day before the dedicatory service, to secure funds in order that the debt might be paid off before the ceremonies began. M. P. Hildebrand (known as Uncle Pink) was treasurer, handling the building funds, and he is reported also to have agreed to mortgage his home for the same purpose.

Pastor Patton's son, R. L. Patton, Jr., wrote many years later about the event: "I've always



been told that he (his father) offered to mortgage his home to pay for the church but the night before the dedication he and Pink Hildebrand and Sam Huffman made a compact to pray on Saturday night that sufficient funds be raised the next morning **before** the dedication. Rev. W. R. Bradshaw was here to speak and spent the night in Hildebrand's home. He told me that Pink Hildebrand prayed in a closet under the stairway most of the night. He heard him in his intercession."

What fervent prayers rose to the throne of Heaven from the trio that night. The next day, inspired to generous giving at a level unknown theretofore, the congregation contributed and pledged enough to cover the indebtedness of the new sanctuary.

The new church cost \$6,526.70, according to expenditures recorded to November 2, 1895. It was noted "Some hundreds of dollars were added later for certain items." It was said of Mr. Hildebrand, the treasurer, "With meticulous care every item of expense was recorded, down to every ball of twine, and every pound of nails." Major expenditures included: communion set, \$16.50; organ, \$150; pews, \$702; bell, \$143.90; windows, \$305. The pulpit Bible came as a gift from a prominent Presbyterian layman, Col. Samuel McDowell Tate, at a cost of \$100.

The phenomenal accomplishment in constructing the new church is told statistically in the Catawba River Association minutes for the annual meeting held in 1895 in the new Morganton church, which must have become something of a showplace. The year before, the church had set a new record of disbursements with over \$850 for all purposes. But for 1895 - the year the new church was completed - it reported total expenditures of \$7,952.54, of which amount \$7,008.25 was listed under "other objects." Undoubtedly this included the cost of the new church. This remarkable record was made by a congregation which grew that year to 179, of whom 63 were males and 116 females.

Indicative of the new era was the fact that there were no baptisms in 1892 but there five in 1893 when R. L. Patton took over the pastorate, followed by 39 baptisms in 1894, the year after the fire, and 41 in 1895, the year in which the new church was completed.

The dynamic Mr. Patton was acknowledged to be a remarkable fund-raiser, among his other qualities. Not noted for his humor, Mr. Patton showed it on occasion, as was told of him in another setting: "One day Patton was raising a special offering, each donor coming forward and laying his gift on the table by which Patton stood. One highly esteemed brother by the name of Coffey came forward with a five dollar bill in hand. Seeing the greenback, Patton said, "Put down Brother Coffey five dollars." The good brother, however, hesitated and explained that he wished to give only one dollar and desired four dollars in change; whereupon Patton shouted, "Put down one dollar. The coffee is not as strong as I thought it was."

A beloved former pastor, Rev. F. A. Bower, delighted to tell how the late Andrew M. Kistler was a great admirer and friend of the late Samuel Huffman, a leading Baptist who happened to share the Patton views on the stewardship of the whole life. Mr. Kistler, so Mr. Bower said, once chided his friend: "Sam if you don't run off Logan Patton from that Baptist church he will bankrupt you as sure as the world." (The last part of the sentence, said Mr. Bower, was in a revised version.)

The same men may have figured in a conversation elsewhere. "Once Mr. Huffman's furniture factory burned to the ground and as he stood with a wealthy friend and looked at the smoldering embers, the rich man said, 'If you had carried heavier insurance on your plant and not given so much to that Baptist church, you'd be in better shape.' In reply Mr. Huffman said, 'Maybe I didn't give enough.'"

The new church marked a new era for the young church, which continued to grow gradually in numbers although it was not until 1899 that the membership passed the 200-mark, being reported that year at 204. By 1908 it reached 306.

Let's look briefly at building and property changes. In 1916 the congregation, feeling the need for more versatile facilities, approved structural changes in the church, with the addition of a new wing on the north side. This wing contained a small auditorium and a dozen classrooms for Sunday School use. In addition, a new Estey pipe organ was installed with the aid of funds from the estate of the late philanthropist, Andrew Carnegie. This work may have extended into the year 1917.

In 1921 steps were taken toward building a new brick residence as a parsonage, next door to the church, moving the frame parsonage toward the back of the lot. When completed about November

1922 "it was one of the finest parsonages in North Carolina." It cost less than \$11,000.

The next building project, a very significant one, was the construction of a three-story educational building on Meeting Street, at the rear of the church. This building contained classrooms and assembly rooms for a departmentalized Sunday School. It was the envy of many churches. This project, completed in 1930, was carried out under the leadership of a committee composed of R. O. Huffman, F. Jerome Wortman and Frank O. Huffman. There was much reluctance on the part of many members to undertake this educational building project because of the cost and the Great Depression.

In the 1940's a Boy Scout hut, as a building for the church-sponsored troop, was constructed on the Catawba River on a lot loaned for the purpose by W. Carl Hudson, life deacon. W. T. Berry, life deacon, was a leader in the erection of this hut, and he was assisted by Tuxie D. Bowers. This continued in use for many years.

Sponsoring a Boy Scout troop has received the continuing interest of the church. In 1979 Tom Shirley received a citation from the church in recognition of his 37 years' participation as a Scouting leader.

In 1949 the pastor, Rev. John Dudley McCready, reported that he and Mrs. McCready planned a memorial for their little son, John Dudley McCready, Jr., born August 31, 1940, and died at the age of seven days. They wished the privilege of giving a lot for the erection of a cottage by the church to be at Ridgecrest, the Baptist Assembly for use of members during summer conferences and spiritual retreats. The gift was accepted and a committee appointed to select the lot and launch a campaign for building a cottage. Soon after the purchase of a lot with the \$600 given by the McCreadys, the committee decided it would be better to buy a house which was for sale near the Assembly grounds so that it could be used the next season. The cost price of the lot was refunded to the church and applied to the purchase price of this property.

A sketch by Mr. McCready tells how Mrs. Clifford Walker, wanting anonymously to give a special sum of money to fill some need of the church, made gifts as "a nest egg, on faith" toward a cottage at Ridgecrest and a hut for Boy Scouts. "This seemed to be an answer to prayer," Mr. McCready wrote. He added, "Thus it was that Mrs. Clifford Walker (nee Elizabeth Walton) had the honor of taking the first step which brought two beautiful dreams to fulfillment."

A project that proved more momentous than the physical changes that it brought, and than the cost of \$32,000 came in 1949.

A three-fold improvement program - alteration, beautification and air-conditioning - for the sanctuary and annex was begun in early August 1949. Alterations included new roof, new ceiling and new windows for the sanctuary; enlargement of choir space and also of the Boy Scout room; construction of a boiler room in the basement; and various changes and improvements in the rooms around the side of the annex or wing.

Beautification consisted of tinting the walls in soft blue-grey; installation of indirect lighting; refinishing the pews in Colonial white; ecclesiastical red carpet for the sanctuary with matching rich red curtains in front of the baptistry and a corresponding space on the other side of the pulpit.

An air-conditioning system was installed to serve the sanctuary and annex, regulating the temperature of all seasons of the year. Thus the church became the first house of worship in Morganton to install air-conditioning.

After having held services in the educational building for over three months, the congregation re-entered the sanctuary with special services of worship and rejoicing Sunday, November 13, 1949 in which the pastor, Rev. John Dudley McCready, was assisted by a former pastor, Rev. F. A. Bower.

The beauty and comfort of the renovated church had a special uplifting effect on the congregation, creating a marked sense of pride and contributing to the beauty of worship.

The Biblical Recorder took note of the renovation project by publishing on its front page a photograph of the interior of the sanctuary with deacons, building committee members, church staff and others assembled around the pulpit with the choir in the background. A sketch told of "the breathtaking beauty" of the interior and described the work completed.

That high-water mark which came in 1949 did not prevent the congregation from turning its



eyes to the future needs of the church. There is probably no record as when the dream of an entirely new and larger church plant was first conceived. It came as no lightning-flash of inspiration calling for sudden or dramatic action. Rather it was as if the congregation by common consent realized that sooner or later the church must build a new home, but the idea was so tremendous in scope and cost that it was approached gradually. The 1949 renovation and beautification did not diminish the dream of what must be. Sunday school classes were being held in the former parsonage, in the former Methodist parsonage which was rented, and in other former residences on King Street because there was insufficient room in the church plant. Within four years' time (after the 1949 improvement) the congregation was to take the important first step in a long-range plan by approving the purchase of a site.

Procurement of three-separate pieces of property to make up the site of the new church-to-be was extended over a period of slightly more than ten years in length. Each of the steps represented a commitment to a plan which everybody knew would crystallize some day into a definite building program.

On Saturday night, March 28, 1953, the deacons met to hear a proposal by Chairman R. O. Huffman relative to the purchase of the John H. Pearson homeplace on West Union Street. This property was initially offered at \$30,000 and ultimately was repriced at \$37,500. On Sunday, March 29 - the following morning - the church family in conference unanimously accepted the deacons' recommendation that the Pearson place be purchased as a church site.

On Saturday night, November 21, 1953, the deacons met along with the recently appointed Planning and Developmental Program Committee to discuss a proposal that the A. M. Kistler home be bought for \$54,000. The church family in conference on Sunday, November 22, accepted unanimously, after some discussion, a recommendation contained in a joint resolution by the deacons and the Planning and Development Program Committee. Thus, the second part of the new property was acquired. The Kistler property, adjoining the Pearson homeplace on the east, included the Kistler home which was recognized as one of the better homes of its day.

The note for these two lots, after initial down payments were made, was finally paid off on December 30, 1957, in a total amount of \$91,500 principal and \$7,060.93 interest.

On January 1, 1962, twenty-four men of the church agreed to underwrite the purchase of the H. L. Milner homeplace (known as the Nolan property), on the corner of Riverside Drive and West Union Street, for a total cost of \$20,000. These twenty-four men and their families were joined by many other individuals and families to pay off this debt and present the Milner home property to the church to substantially expand the parking area. Final payment was made October 7, 1963. The Milner property, lying to the west of the Pearson place, extended the site to include frontage on Riverside Dr.

Earlier - in 1958 - the church family had approved the creation of a 28-member Building Committee, and in 1963 was ready to vote formally to proceed with a construction of a new church. Construction was started November 4, 1964 after a contract was awarded to the W. R. Patton Company, and a formal groundbreaking ceremony was held November 22. Construction was completed in early June 1967, and the first service was held in the new sanctuary June 18. A week later - June 25 - a cornerstone was installed with formal ceremonies.

The total cost of the new home was "almost exactly \$1,250,000, including land, building, renovations to the Kistler home, architecture, landscaping, furniture, equipment and interest on loan."

This cost, as reported by Sam W. Freeman, treasurer of the Building Fund from its start, was met as follows: Sale of old property, \$125,000, or ten per cent; gifts to Building Fund, \$1,000,000 or 80 per cent; interest and gain on investments, \$75,000, for six per cent; miscellaneous, \$50,000, for four per cent.

The \$1 million in gifts came from an estimated 2,000 persons, with a total of 26,000 designated gifts to defray the cost.

On October 11, 1970, the Building Funds debt stood at about \$153,000, a couple among the members challenged the membership to reduce the debt to \$50,000 by the close of 1971, with a pledge

that the challenger would pay the last \$50,000. The membership raised a total of \$110,375 to go toward principal and interest between October 11, 1970 and December 21, 1971.

There was good reason to celebrate at the noteburning ceremony January 9, 1972, with Rev. R. Knolan Benfield, pastor, presiding. Reports were made by Sam W. Freeman as Building Fund treasurer and C. C. Harrell as chairman of the Building Committee. Two life deacons, Robert O. Huffman, who for many years was chairman of the deacons and W. T. Berry, who held the distinction of having made both the first and last contributions to the Building Fund, were called upon to officiate at the burning of the note, with Mr. Huffman striking the match and Mr. Berry surrendering the evidence of indebtedness to the flames in a platter which he held.

Guest speaker was Rev. Jack R. Bagwell, a former member of the church who was then consultant with the Church Architecture Department of the Southern Baptist Convention's Sunday School Board at Nashville, Tennessee. Mr. Bagwell who urged the congregation to move from a financial challenge to a challenge to grow in concerns for people, touched on the significance of the early retirement of the building debt. If it had been paid off in 15 years, it would have been "most commendable"; in ten years, it would have been "exceptional"; but to pay off in less than five years is "nothing less than miraculous."

There is no need to dwell overlong on the completion of the new church in 1967 and the noteburning ceremony in 1972, with the 90th anniversary observance of the church in 1969 sandwiched in between.

Each seemed to stand as high-water marks in the history of the congregation, and it is understandable that in some quarters there was a tendency to feel that at long last the church had arrived. But some philosopher has said "To travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive." The congregation generally did not fall into the temptation of feeling that they had arrived with the completion of the new physical plant of great grandeur and with the retirement of its indebtedness. Important as they were, they considered them only as milestones and they continue to "travel hopefully."

There have been many milestones in the past which have shown that it is the Baptist tradition to continue to travel hopefully, rather than at any time to complacently feel that they have arrived. Some of these may have seemed insignificant at the time, even to those taking part, but their significance has been established in the perspective of years. It is in order to mention several of them.

First of all, of course, was the organization of the church in 1879. Much went on in the way of quiet, solid building of interest and faith before the mountain-top experience of dedicating the King Street church July 14, 1895.

Then there was the coming of the Baptist State Convention which held its session in the new Morganton church in November 1896. Never again can the State Convention be expected to meet here, unless perchance Morganton becomes a large city with tremendous convention capacity.

On January 24, 1905, the deacons took an action with far-reaching effect. The minutes say: "Brother Kesler, by request from the ladies of the church, asked the deacons if they were willing and would encourage the ladies in organizing a Woman's Missionary Society. After some discussion, Brother J. H. Walker made a motion that the deacons recommend to the church that encouragement be given to the ladies in organizing a Woman's Mission Society." (The deacons were in a generous mood at that session. Another entry in the minutes of the same meeting says: "On motion, Bro. M. P. Hildebrand, treasurer, was instructed to pay Sippio, the old Negro who cleans the church, 25 cents instead of 15 cents").

It is assumed that the WMS was organized that year - 1905 - shortly after the action of the deacons, but the exact date is not a matter of record. The First Baptist Church is credited with having the first WMU in the Association. A brief history of the Catawba River Association said: "The first W.M.U in the association was organized in 1912 at the Morganton First Baptist Church. This was the beginning of women's work in the churches." (This same sketch tells of the further progress of women with the statement: "In the 1915 annual meeting (of the association), women for the first time had been granted the privilege of speaking before the assembly").

The association's date of 1912 may have been the time that the women's organization was



approved association-wide, since the Morganton First Church WMU apparently had been in operation for some time.

Mrs. J. F. Spainhour is believed to have been the first president when it was organized about 1905. Mrs. James Sparks and Mrs. R. B. Moore played a large part in the beginning of this work. Mrs. J. Ernest Erwin, after coming to Morganton in 1908, contributed largely to the growth and success of the society.

In 1911, Mrs. Erwin, urged and encouraged by Miss Fannie E. S. Heck who was head of the work in the state at that time, attempted to organize other societies in the association. During this year a society was organized at Enon Church. In 1912, six more societies were formed, making a total of eight. Mrs. Spainhour, Mrs. Sparks, and Miss Mabel Haynes, who later went to Cuba as a missionary, played a large part in helping to start the work in these churches.

At the November 1906 meeting of the deacons, further evidence of progress came with this entry: "The question of organizing a Sunbeam Society was brought up and, on motion of E. F. Mumford, Miss Mabel Haynes was given the opportunity to organize the society and to have the support and encouragement of the church."

The Sunbeams were established that year under the aegis of the Women's Missionary Society.

There have been changes through the years in the pattern of women's work. In 1968 major changes came about in the organization. The circle plan was changed to Mission Groups. Then in 1970 the organization became known as Baptist Women instead of Woman's Missionary Society. The present membership of Baptist Women in the First Baptist Church is 115, including 25 officers and leaders. Some twenty faithful make up the junior group.

It has not been established when it occurred, but early in this century the election of women as deaconesses apparently was authorized, for there is a record that Mrs. Brent Rhyne held that title and served as secretary of the board. (Her daughter, Mrs. Era Crouch, later served as Sunday School treasurer for 31 years.) The use of deaconesses may have been of short duration, with the church reverting to the "typical Baptist pattern" of having the women assume the role of custodians of the religious zeal and piety but with the men retaining the responsibility of actually operating the church's affairs.

The year 1906 brought a noteworthy development when Dr. George W. Truett of Dallas, Texas, was invited to conduct a revival in the church. This entry was made in the deacons' minutes for April 9, 1906: "The pastor brought before the deacons the question of having a general revival in all the churches at the same time. It was decided to get Rev. George W. Truett of Dallas, Texas, to conduct a meeting for us." Dr. Truett, the choice of the pastor, Rev. William Francis Powell, was a native of the Western North Carolina mountain region who was to become known widely as "Mr. Baptist." He was one of the most beloved presidents the Southern Baptist Convention ever had, and he was elected president of the Baptist World Alliance. There is no record to show whether Dr. Truett came to Morganton or not for the proposed revival.

At a deacons' meeting January 24, 1905, a suggestion by the pastor, Rev. M. L. Kesler, was adopted with the decision to take an offering for the Baptist Orphanage each month (according to one of the earlier sketches of the church). The usual Thanksgiving Day contribution was made to the orphanage, with a goal set at \$100, both in 1905 and for a number of years thereafter. Mr. Kesler was later to become superintendent of the State Baptist orphanage, the Mills Home.

That the church was mission-minded, both locally as well as foreign, is shown by an entry in the minutes of October 1910 reflecting an interest in establishing another Baptist church in Morganton. The minutes state: "On motion, a committee of three was appointed to confer with Bro. Hagerman about buying a lot near the depot on which to build a Baptist Church. The committee appointed was E. F. Mumford, Samuel Huffman, and W. E. Walton."

The reference here undoubtedly was to Rev. J. P. Hagaman, then pastor of Mount Home Baptist Church who helped to organize what is now Calvary Baptist Church November 10, 1910. Mr. Hagaman became its first pastor. The church, then called the Second Baptist Church, rented a Presbyterian chapel on the road just south of the depot. A new church was built across the street from the chapel and was occupied May 7, 1911. W. L. Kirksey of the First Baptist Church went to the church

to serve as Sunday School Superintendent and to help get it started. He was one of the first deacons and was the first church clerk. A history of Calvary Baptist Church (issued on its 50th anniversary observance October 26-30, 1960) reporting on the organization of the church notes that R. L. Patton and J. F. Spainhour assisted . . . About 75 were present for this meeting. R. L. Patton preached at the 11 o'clock service. The Second Baptist Church went to full-time preaching in the latter part of 1915 and the name was changed to East Morganton Baptist Church. The congregation moved to a new church at the present site December 20, 1925, and the name of the church was changed to Calvary.

There was a strong fraternal link with the First Baptist Church and Calvary which was the next Baptist church to be formed in the community. There are now a total of eight Baptist churches within the city limits of Morganton.

Significant enough to justify a detailed history of its own among the enterprises of the church is the record of the class for the deaf. This project was a special interest of the late Mrs. Frank O. Huffman who was for many years its teacher. Others who played an important part in its career were the late Dr. Odie W. Underhill and Miss Carrie Haynes. A special section was reserved for the deaf on the occasion of the noteburning ceremony on January 9, 1972 in recognition of the part they had played in the building program.

It was in 1946 that the church employed its first full-time director of music, Miss Elizabeth Turner, a graduate of the Westminster Choir College. This action came at the recommendation of the Music Committee which included such persons as Mrs. Clifford E. Walker, G. T. Cornwell and Mrs. E. M. Hairfield, Sr.

Mrs. Hairfield had effectively served as organist-director for a number of years, and Mrs. Walker had served in that capacity just prior to Mrs. Turner's employment, and their leadership had laid a good foundation of interest and support for such a ministry.

Organizing the choirs on a graded basis, Miss Turner added to the good work already accomplished, and the church moved into its first comprehensive music ministry, with regular rehearsals for all choirs. These robed choirs assumed responsibility for leadership in worship services and led services of worship through music as such festival seasons as Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter.

Miss Turner was succeeded in turn by Mrs. Beryl Wiltshire, Miss Mary Elizabeth Roberts and Miss Martha Kelly.

Through the years since its formal beginning, the choirs' portion of the music ministry has had steady growth. Under the leadership of Jack H. Campbell, who has served as Minister of Music since 1958, there are 291 persons enrolled in from seven to nine choral groups and 32 additional persons in leadership responsibilities.

Gifts which have been made for use in the music ministry of the church include a very fine three-manual Reuter organ which was presented for installation in the new sanctuary by Mrs. Minnie Huffman Reddish.

In 1971 a three-octave set of English handbells, cast by Whitechapel Bell Foundry of London, England, was presented to the church by the family of Ralph Clark as a memorial to him.

Also, in 1971, a harpsichord was presented to the church by the family of the late F. J. Wortman as a memorial to him.

Many significant events that have occurred during the life of the First Baptist Church of Morganton must be bypassed in any review because of their sheer number. But it is agreed that the 75th anniversary celebration on October 24, 1954 was a noteworthy observance. Dr. I. G. Greer of Chapel Hill, prominent layman and former president of the Baptist State Convention, was speaker. He was regarded affectionately as a "son-in-law" of the church, having married the former Miss Willie Spainhour.

Another moving service in this generation came May 15, 1955 when Robert O. Huffman stepped down after 18 years as chairman of the board of deacons and F. Jerome Wortman resigned as treasurer of the building fund. Both were ordained deacons on the same day in 1924.

Mr. Huffman asked to be relieved as chairman and recommended that the church adopt a rotational plan for chairmen who should be elected one year at a time with a limit of two consecutive



years as chairman. This suggestion was adopted.

Mr. Wortman, soon after becoming a member of the church in 1916, became a leader of the B.Y.P.U. - Baptist Young Peoples Union and served for many years as superintendent of the Junior Department in the Sunday school. He had been treasurer of the building fund for over thirty-five years.

The ceremony for the resignations came on Mr. Huffman's sixty-fifth birthday. G. Maurice Hill was spokesman for the board of deacons, and C. C. Harrell was announced as the new chairman.

Mr. Huffman may have been just the third chairman to head the board of deacons since the founding of the church in 1879. Oldtimers recalled that Prof. E. McK. Goodwin was apparently elected chairman about 1900 and served until 1937, the year of his death, at which time Mr. Huffman succeeded him. The only other chairman older members could remember was Marcus D. Brittain, a charter member, and it was presumed that he may have served from the outset until Prof. Goodwin was elected.

The history of a church cannot be measured solely in terms of physical plants and financial reports, important as they are. The accomplishments of the First Baptist Church of Morganton, which have been phenomenal, must be attributed to people - men, women, and children who have responded in their church life to what they considered the will of God.

The church has been extremely fortunate in the overall spirituality of its members and the godliness of its leadership. All who are entitled to a place on any church honor roll form a list so long that it would be impossible to record them here. Therefore just a few outstanding members who are now deceased will be listed:

**REV. JAMES REDDEN JONES:** First pastor (listed as "supply" during initial period when the minister was paid by the Association). Presumed to have been a charter member. Listed as pastor from 1879 to 1884. (He was also pastor of First Baptist Church of Hickory from 1879 to October 1884). The Baptist Historical Collection at Wake Forest University Library reports the only biographical information it has available is as follows: "James Redden Jones, Franklin County, N.C., attended Wake Forest 1872-77; received a B.S. degree in 1877. Ordained in 1876 at Flat Rock Church; pastor in Wake, Franklin and Caswell counties and at Hickory, Smithfield, Milton, and Royal, N.C.; died June 28, 1914."

(NOTE: Early pastors at the Hickory First Baptist Church included four who had concurrent partially overlapping terms of service in Morganton. This was due to practice of once-a-month services which enabled a minister to serve more than one church. These include (according to the R. K. Benfield history of the Hickory church): J. R. Jones, 1879-October 1884; N. B. Cobb, 1884-84 (1885?); G. W. Gardner, October 1886-March 1888; H. D. Lequeux, January 1889-August 1892. This shows a strong link with the Hickory church when both congregations were young. Other pastors at Hickory included W. R. Bradshaw, March 1917-December 1925; and R. Knolan Benfield, April 1943-June 1957. In both of these cases, these pastors left Hickory to come to the First Church in Morganton. The Morganton congregation is grateful to the sister church in Hickory for providing a training ground for such outstanding pastors who, when they had been whetted and honed to the fullness of their powers, were then called to the Morganton pulpit).

**REV. EPHRAIM SYLVESTER WHISNANT:** A charter member of the church who was also an ordained minister. In the records is this sketch: The Reverend E. S. Whisnant was born near Morganton, N.C., Burke County, September 14, 1849. He was married to Miss Louisa Benfield in 1871. He joined the Zion Baptist Church about 1874. He was a charter member of the Morganton First Church (1879) and was superintendent of the Sunday School for eight years. He was superintendent of the Sunday School at Zion for a long time and superintendent at Maiden for twelve or fourteen years. He was Sunday School superintendent and did supply and evangelistic work in three counties - Burke, Caldwell and Catawba. "While superintendent at Morganton, he walked three miles in the afternoon to run the Sunday School at Mount Home Baptist Church." Relatives report that he died March 14, 1930 and his wife died January 19, 1922.

**REV. NEEDHAM BRYAN COBB:** Often listed as "first pastor" of church. Served 1884-87. He may have been the first called pastor, inasmuch as the first minister was paid by the Catawba River

Association as a mission enterprise. A sketch of the church by the late Mrs. Maud Patton Anthony says of him, he "must have been a man outstanding in leadership as well as godliness. We recall our mother speaking often of this man's great piety and dedication to his work."

**MILES PINKNEY HILDEBRAND:** Charter member, longtime leader. His dedication is legendary. For a time he would go early to the church on Sunday to light a fire in the stove so the building would be warm in time for the service. No impression of the First Baptist Church could overlook the mental image, from a frequently heard description, of Uncle Pink Hildebrand crawling on hands and knees on a snow and ice-covered walk up a slope to reach the church on King Street while on his way from his home on Valdese Avenue. He had been observed under such conditions on Meeting Street, probably near where the former educational building stood. Another image is that left by Mrs. Maud Patton Anthony who, in her church sketch, described Mr. Hildebrand's practice making change for Sunday School-goers from a capacious pocket filled with pennies, nickels and other coins. She wrote: "This was the procedure: the eldest child (if responsible) would bring up a five or ten-cent piece to Mr. Hildebrand, who sat by the little table, to get change from him - the childish feeling of wonder yet - how many thousands of pennies were there in that capacious pocket, for every would-be 'changer' the fist came up full of pennies and small change. Then came the passing out of the pennies, one to each child of the family to give in their various classes . . . In connection with these Sunday School collections, it is recalled that at or near the close of Sunday School, if the offering had been as much as one dollar or more, Mr. Hildebrand announced it. If it was less than a dollar, nothing was said about the collection.

Mr. Hildebrand was treasurer of the building fund for the new church constructed 1894-95 and members of his family were always told that like pastor Patton he agreed to mortgage his home to raise money for the debt in time for the dedication service. He was a member of a prayer compact involving R. L. Patton and Samuel Huffman in which the three agreed to pray on Saturday night that sufficient funds should be raised by the dedication service the next morning to pay the construction cost. He was the father of the late Mrs. W. Carl Hudson and brother-in-law of the late Samuel Huffman.

**SAMUEL HUFFMAN:** A church sketch referring to the period 1887-88 stated "New families moving to Morganton and vicinity in the late 80's added to the church roll" and then were listed Samuel Huffman and Mrs. Huffman as members. Mr. Huffman was a great tower of strength during the life of the new church. On November 17, 1908, at the deacons' meeting, it was decided to ask the church to elect "Brothers Hairfield and S. Huffman as deacons." The records do not indicate the exact date of Mr. Hairfield's ordination but state that on Sunday, October 23, 1910, S. Huffman and W. E. Walton (the father of Mrs. Clifford Walker) were ordained. Mr. Huffman never served as chairman and had, in fact, declined a deacon's position for some years because he felt he was not worthy of the high office. When he was convinced that no deacon really felt worthy, he finally consented to serve.

The Huffman home was the residence where visiting ministers were entertained. Mr. Huffman had been a source of strength in the building of a new church after the fire of 1893. He was a strong supporter of Rev. Robert L. Patton, whose children and grandchildren dedicated the book "Patton: Southern Highlander" to the memory of the late Mr. Huffman "who stood by him in life and by his bed in death." Rev. Fred A. Bower, pastor 1917-25, said in a letter regarding work conducted during his tenure that "Three outstanding men were among the deacons at that time. They were Samuel Huffman, E. McK. Goodwin and J. F. Spainhour. I have never had three men of their caliber since..."

Mr. Huffman's daughter, Minnie, married one of the pastors of the church, Rev. W. H. Reddish. Two of his sons, Frank O. Huffman, who died in 1935, and Robert O. Huffman, who died in 1978, lifetime deacon (1924) and for eighteen years chairman of the board of deacons, were prominently identified with the church. The two sons were on the building committee for a new educational building dedicated in 1930.

**E. MCK. GOODWIN:** Prof. Goodwin came to Morganton in 1894 as the first superintendent and founding spirit of the N. C. School for the Deaf. He was a man of great ability and intense spiritual devotion. Elected chairman of board of deacons about 1900 and held the position until 1937, the year he died.

**JOSEPH F. SPAINHOUR:** A former school teacher turned lawyer. He founded Oak Hill



Academy in Grayson County, Virginia, where he met Sue Parks who later became his wife at the age of 17. In 1895, when he was solicitor of this (Tenth) Judicial district residing at Boone, he moved to Morganton (mainly, it was said, to get the advantages of school here for his children). Here children Lettie, Fred Parks and Willie were prepared for college. (It was after the Spainhour's arrival (1896) that daughter Annie was born). Mrs. Spainhour taught a class in the Sunday school and served for a time as WMS president. Mr. Spainhour, an able attorney and a vigorous personality, was a staunch teacher of a Bible class for many years and was a life-long deacon (being one of the superb trio of Huffman-Spainhour-Goodwin cited by Rev. F. A. Bower). Mrs. Anthony's sketch says "In his twilight years he still attended the church he loved although unable to hear the preaching or scarcely even the singing." Ponder the influence of this family through their children - Lettie became the wife of Rev. P. W. Hamlett and served as a missionary to China; Willie became the wife of Dr. I. G. Greer, longtime head of the Baptist Orphanages of North Carolina and president of the Baptist State Convention; and Annie who was the wife of Charles Ernest Walker and who, affectionately known as "Miss Annie," has been the most influential woman in the work of the church in this generation, in the opinion of many friends.

**EDWARD M. HAIRFIELD:** Came to Morganton in 1907 after graduating the year before from Wake Forest College Law School. Engaged in law practice here before being named superintendent of the Morganton City Schools in 1910, serving for five years in that position before resuming law practice. Was mayor of Morganton 1929 and State Senator 1933. Was elected deacon in 1908 and served until his death. Was teacher of the Baraca Class for many years and served as church clerk from about 1912 to 1928.

**JEROME WORTMAN:** Became a member of church in 1916 and soon thereafter became a leader in the BYPU (later Training Union). Became superintendent of Junior Department in Sunday School and served for many years. Ordained a deacon in 1924 on the same date as R. O. Huffman. Served as treasurer of the church building fund for 35 years, retiring May 15, 1955. During his tenure as treasurer, he was identified with construction of a parsonage and educational building, beautification and air-conditioning of sanctuary, and purchase of site for a new and larger church. His wife served as an officer and often a teacher in Junior Department with her husband for nearly forty years, in addition to being active in WMU and a member of the church choir.

**MARCUS D. BRITTAIN:** Marcus D. Brittain, his wife, Minerva Hawkins Brittain, and daughter, Sarah Elizabeth, comprised a fourth of the twelve charter members of the Morganton Baptist Church. He was an early chairman of the board of deacons - probably the first.

Early records of the Catawba River Association indicate his interest and activity in expanding the Baptist faith in Burke County. Going from Pleasant Hill church, he apparently was instrumental in helping organize Bartles Chapel in 1873. (This name was later changed to Mt. Home Baptist Church). Six years later the Morganton Church was organized. Associational Minutes record his attendance as a delegate at meetings many times, and show that he served on committees such as executive, re-districting, ministerial education, arrangements and others.

In the building of the new church on King Street it is recorded in two instances that Mr. Brittain sold tracts of land and gave the money to the building fund. Records also show gifts of lumber.

Mr. Brittain was a quiet, unassuming man, but one of profound faith and devotion to his church and family. He died at his home in southern Burke County in 1903 at the age of 79. Mrs. Brittain died in 1917 at the age of 93.

Three of the Brittains' grandchildren are active members of the church at present. They are Elizabeth Walker, Clarence Williams and Hartsell Williams. Several other descendants are members of the congregation.

**JULIUS A. COX:** Julius Alexander Cox and his wife, Phoebe Elizabeth Shull Cox, were charter members of First Baptist Church. Mr. Cox was instrumental in helping get the church organized and was its first secretary. Early records show the meticulous way in which his books were kept. He served in this office for a number of years.

Mr. Cox was born in Upper Creek Township on February 20, 1848. As a young man he went to the Mid-West where he worked for several years and shared some of the excitement of early pioneer

life.

Upon returning home, he married Miss Shull and moved to Morganton where he became a merchant. This type of work soon lost its appeal, however, and he returned to the farm in Upper Creek. But once again he moved back to town in order that his children might attend the R. L. Patton School. After some years the farm lured him back, and he spent his remaining years there.

It was during his first stay in Morganton that he helped organize the church. He also served as a county commissioner for a number of years.

Mrs. Cox taught school for several years before her marriage, having received her education for the most part from her mother and from an aunt, Miss Leah Spainhour, first cousin of J. F. Spainhour.

Mr. and Mrs. Cox were the parents of eight children, one of whom is a present member of the church, our beloved Miss Mary Cox. Several grandchildren and one great-grandchild are also present members.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Cox were members of Smyrna Church at the time of their deaths, hers occurring on April 19, 1933, and his on March 22, 1935.

**MINISTERS:** The procession of ministers who have served the First Baptist Church of Morganton have brought to the church a zeal and dedication which have left their distinctive mark upon the congregation through the years from its founding in 1879. The roster of pastors as complete as can be prepared follows:

J. R. Jones (Supply), 1879-1884

N. B. Cobb, 1884-87

G. W. Gardner, 1887-88

R. L. Patton, 1888-89

H. D. Lequeux, 1889-92

No Pastor, 1892

R. L. Patton, Jan. 1, 1893-96

E. F. Jones, 1896-97

R. L. Patton 1897-98

S. J. Porter 1898-1900

R. L. Patton, 1900-1901

W. H. Reddish, 1901-04

M. L. Kesler, 1904-05

No Pastor, 1905-06

W. F. Powell, 1906-07

J. D. Larkin, 1907,09

James Long, 1909-11

E. N. Johnson, 1911-14

J. R. Williams, 1914-17

F. A. Bower, 1917-25

W. R. Bradshaw, 1925-34

R. L. Councilman, 1934-38

J. D. McCready, 1939-44

F. A. Bower (Supply), 1944-46

J. D. McCready, 1946-56

F. A. Bower (Supply), 1956-57

R. K. Benfield, 1957-73

Wendell T. Guerry, 1973-81

**REV. FRED A. BOWER:** Because of his unique position in the history of this church and in the affection of its people, Mr. Bower holds the official title of Pastor Emeritus for life, which was conferred on him by vote of the congregation in July 1957 at the first service conducted by the then incoming pastor, Rev. R. Knolan Benfield. On that date, Mr. Bower completed his fourth period of service to the church in a span of forty years. A native of Nova Scotia, Mr. Bower was called to the pastorate in 1917 from Albany, N. Y. beginning his duties in Morganton May 13, 1917. He remained for eight years until 1925. After pastorates in Albemarle and Kannapolis, he returned to Morganton to live, having given up pastoral work for health reasons. When Rev. John D. McCready entered the military service as chaplain in August 1944, Mr. Bower served as supply or interim pastor. The Bowers resided in the parsonage until January 1, 1946, when Pastor McCready returned. On September 29, 1946, the church granted Mr. McCready a three-months' leave to accept an assignment from the Home Mission Board which was concluded December 15, 1946, and Mr. Bower supplied the pulpit again. On September 10, 1956, Mr. McCready preached his farewell sermon before leaving for a teaching position and Mr. Bower was called on to supply until the coming of Mr. Benfield in July 1957. Although Mr. Bower now resides at Penney Farms in Florida, the Pastor Emeritus (whose wife has died) has maintained an active interest in the church and its progress, notably in its building program and in recent efforts leading to the retirement of its building indebtedness. Thus after a unique relationship which had its beginning 62 years ago, this church has continued to be the object of his gifts, his prayers and his love. Blest be the tie that binds him and us in mutual affection and in a sincere desire to work for the glory of god. At this writing, Mr. Bower is 97 years old, having been born December 13, 1881.

**REV. KNOLAN BENFIELD:** Mr. Benfield became pastor of First Baptist Church in 1957 and served until his retirement, June 30, 1973. In December, 1974 he was named Pastor Emeritus.

During his 16 years as pastor, Mr. Benfield was leader of the church during a period important in the history of the growth of the church as well as its spiritual development. Acquisition of a final tract of land for a site and the fulfillment of a long-standing dream of a new church came during his pastorate and a building committee was appointed. He officiated at the groundbreaking in 1964, the year after the church voted to proceed with the building; at the first service in 1967 and a cornerstone ceremony the following week; and then came the debt retirement ceremony in 1972.

Mr. Benfield, who was pastor at First Church, Hickory for 14 years before coming to Morganton, was for 14 years a member of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, served as a member of the Baptist Foundation under the Baptist State Convention, and a trustee of Wake Forest University. He was long a member of the general board and held other positions in the Baptist State Convention.

Mrs. Benfield, a leader in women's work, served as State president of the Woman's Missionary Union.

Mr. Benfield's tenure reflected great ability to keep in balance the church's pre-occupation with the ambitious building program with the necessity for maintaining regular church programs with undiminished attention.



## **PERSONS ORDAINED IN FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**

Brightie E. White, Jr. (1953)  
Jimmy Hardin (1965)  
Luther M. (Skip) Pike (1978)

## **PERSONS LICENSED BY FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**

E. C. Denton (1913)  
Brightie E. White, Jr. (1951)  
James Griffith (1951)  
Luther M. Pike (1976)

## **SERVING IN CHURCH-RELATED VOCATIONS**

Gale Haynes Benfield	Mary Ann Smith Joyner
Walter Davis	Grover Kirksey
Joe Edge	Gray Murray
Hazel Grady	Luther M. Pike, Jr.
James H. Griffith	Fred Schuszler
James Hardin	Emily Hemphill Thompson
Pat Haynes	Brightie White, Jr.
Charles Hudson	Judy Hogshead Winton
Philip Johnson	Carl Troy Woodbury
J. B. Jones	Stephen H. Zukor

## **MISSIONARIES (going out from church)**

Mabel Haynes, Cuba  
Lettie Hamlett, China, 1909-1951  
Dr. Cecil Thompson, 1957, Argentina  
Charles Anderson, Ethiopia  
Philecta Clarke Staton, Tanzania (formerly Ethiopia and Kenya)

## **MISSIONARIES (Supported in part by church)**

Miss Marie Conner, 1945-1979, (China, Formosa, Taiwan)  
Miss Rebecca Eddinger, 1945-1951, (Chile)  
Wade Bryant Hicks, 1955-1965, (Phillipines)

## **MINISTERS OF MUSIC AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Miss Mary Louise Coakley, 1939  
Miss Ila Hensley, Ed. Dir., 1939  
Miss Helen E. Harris, Ed. Dir., 1940  
Albert Hewitt, Jr., Dir. of Music, 1941  
Miss Nell Woodbury, Organist, 1941  
Mrs. James H. Lang, Choir Director, 1943  
Miss Elisabeth H. Turner, Minister of Music, 1946  
Mrs. John L. Wiltshire, Minister of Music, 1948  
Miss Mary Elizabeth Roberts, Minister of Music, 1950  
Mrs. John L. Wiltshire, Minister of Music, 1951  
Harry E. Crosby, Director of Religious Ed., 1955  
Miss Martha Ann Kelley, Minister of Music, 1956-58  
Jack H. Campbell, Minister of Music and Education, 1958-1979



H. Preston Capps, Jr., Minister of Education, 1964  
Rev. Edward Landrus, Minister of Education, 1967-1976  
Rev. Robert W. Russell, Minister of Education, 1977-1979

### **ORGANISTS**

Mrs. E. M. Hairfield, 1917-1944	Camille Thomas, 1975
Mrs. Clifford Walker, 1944-1951	Mary Frances Whitener, 1976-1977
Mrs. Gilbert Walker, 1951-1967	Libby Cecil, 1978-
Mrs. John Whitener, 1967-1974	

### **SECRETARIES**

Mrs. John Hall, 1956-1962	Mrs. Don M. Smith, 1967-1976
Mrs. Billie Cox, 1962	Mrs. Allen Lambert, 1973-
Mrs. A. E. Dees, 1962-	

### **SEXTONS**

Althia Hern (Custodian)	George Burge, 1966
Pinkney Caldwell, 1946	O. E. Allen, 1971
Eugene O'Neil, 1954	Gene Lane, 1971-1977
H. S. Fleming, 1954-1966	Tim Walker, 1977-

### **MAID**

Mrs. Sudie Williams

### **KINDERGARTEN**

Mrs. Jack H. Campbell, Dir., 1967-1969	Mrs. Hugh Sellers, Dir., 1969-
<b>Teachers:</b>	<b>Mother's Day Out Program:</b>
Mrs. Hugh Sellers, 1967-1979	Mrs. Pearl Cannon
Mrs. O'Brien Brooks, 1969	Mrs. Virgie Hastings
Mrs. Ed Parkerson, 1970-1972	Mrs. Bonnie McFadden
Mrs. Jean Abshire, Aide, 1967-1978	Mrs. Hessie Mitchell
Mrs. Martha Rippley, 1974-1974	Mrs. Ethel Rader
Mrs. Lottie Beasley, 1973	Mrs. Rena Sadler
Mrs. Ann Guerrey, 1974-1975	Mrs. Blanche Byrd
Mrs. Sandra Wall, 1974	Mrs. Flora Mae Hardin
Mrs. Alice Deaton, 1973-1974	Mrs. Elaine Rogers
Mrs. Jonnie McIlwain, 1973-1976	Mrs. Vivian Schuszler
Mrs. Mardee Black, 1976-1979	
Mrs. Terri Barron, 1977-1978	
Mrs. Carolyn Williams, 1977	
Mrs. Sharon Fouts, 1978-	
Mrs. Flora Mae Hardin, Aide, 1978-	

### **CHURCH HOSTESSES**

Mrs. Joyce Evans, 1974-1978	Mrs. Alice Deaton, 1978-
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### **FOOD SERVICE PERSONNEL**

Earline Erwin	Lucinda Avery	Janie Avery
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### **YOUTH DIRECTORS**

Gary Crismond, 1974	Philip Johnson, 1977, 1978, 1979
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## **Second Segment of History First Baptist Church**

By: Sam W. Freeman, Church Historian

### **PASTOR AND MRS. BENFIELD**

As time for retirement drew near, Pastor Benfield liked to recall great truths that had become a part of his personal christian code of life. It was upon such an occasion that he wrote for the Church Week in a January 1973 edition in these words: "One year ago in this column I was writing about our being free of indebtedness as we had just removed all debt on our new church home. I also mentioned another debt we will never be able to pay in full -- the debt we owe as Christians to those who do not know Jesus Christ as savior. The hope was expressed that we might do more through the Cooperative Program gifts increased from \$7,069 to \$15,262 and all mission and benevolent giving from \$14,015 to \$33,033. During the past associational year (ending last September 30) we did give more as gifts for the Cooperative Program were \$20,258 and our total gifts for missions and benevolences were \$38,967. Our present budget calls for \$22,500 through Cooperative Program. This kind of increase would continue as we move toward the ideal of giving as much for others as we keep for ourselves. This will be determined by the kind of stewards we are as individuals."

Mr. Benfield in his final note to the congregation said, in part, "when you read this, if the church follows the recommendation of the pulpit committee, you will have called a young man to serve as your pastor. Sunday, June 24, 1973 will be our last Sunday with you as pastor as our retirement date is June 30, 1973." In the same letter Mr. Benfield said, speaking for both of them, that he again wished to thank the church for making it possible for them to have a home in which to live in retirement.

The Benfields served the First Baptist Church in a wonderful way during the 16 years they spent with us. He quietly held us on a steady course during the many months of fund raising, construction and equipping the church and during the final funds drive that enabled us to have a debt-free church five years after first occupancy.

Mrs. Benfield served not only in the First Baptist Churches in Hickory and Morganton but was a highly respected leader in Womans Missionary enterprises all over the State and Southern Conventions. Both of the Benfields stressed Missions every day of their lives. Their contributions to the ongoing of the Kingdom shall long be remembered by those whose lives they touched during their many years of service. They spent time in retirement serving with the Mills Home Baptist Church and finally they spent a year of service in the Baptist Church of Corby, England.

### **CHURCH CONFERENCE -- JUNE 3, 1973**

The Pulpit Search Committee having been afield for several weeks, were heard in Church Conference. In their final report the committee recommended the calling of Rev. Mr. Wendell T. Guerry as our next pastor. The response was an overwhelming majority in favor of calling Mr. Guerry in July 1973. When the call was issued, Mr. Guerry accepted the call and the date of July 22, 1973 was established as the first day he would fill our pulpit. On that Dr. A. M. Lang, Chairman of Deacons introduced Mr. Guerry to the fellowship, and after a prayer, he concluded with these words: "Wendell, this pulpit is God's in your charge."

### **BUS**

In the church records is a note dated November 8, 1973 calling attention to a drive to purchase a church bus for church activities. An appropriation of \$6,000 was set up in the 1973-74 budget as a nest egg for this purchase. It was planned that there would be a good response to this announcement in form of donations. The bus committee was authorized to negotiate for a bus during a special conference on November 11, 1973. It was suggested that the committee take prompt action as the price of used bus equipment was expected to escalate after the turn of the year.

## **JACK CAMPBELL'S ANNIVERSARY**

On November 15, 1973 the church celebrated Mr. Jack Campbell's 15th anniversary as Minister of Music. During his tenure Mr. Campbell won many friends in the community beyond the walls of First Baptist Church. He was recognized as Morganton's Man of the Year in 1969.

## **HOLIDAY FESTIVAL**

On November 22, 1973 it was announced that a Holiday Festival would be conducted in the Fellowship Hall. The purpose of the Festival was to provide "togetherness" for the Church family and to generate funds for the purchase of a bus. In a note dated December 6, 1973 it was stated that the sum of \$2,895.70 was raised by the festival.

## **NECROLOGY 1973**

During the year 1973 the following members of the fellowship passed away:

Mrs. A. B. Keller	Mr. J. Gordon Queen
Mr. J. Arthur Williams	Mr. Arthur Merilla
Mr. Arnold Cooper	Mr. W. M. Senter
Mr. James Black	Mrs. Virgie Michaels

## **THE BRITISH ARE COMING**

On August 1, 1974 the Church Week announced that, in truth, the British were on their way to Morganton. The announcement stated that a special delegation of men and women from England would arrive in Morganton on August 6. "They are a group of Britishers who will stop by Morganton on a tour of North Carolina. They come from where the Benfields are currently serving. They are to arrive in Morganton that morning and will present a program at a luncheon in the Fellowship Hall hosted by the W. M. U. "The story went on to say that they would tour our facilities and the Morganton area, then on to Ridgecrest to spend the night in our cottage." This was an outgrowth of a visit of the Benfields to the church in Corby, England.

## **DR. A. M. LANG, MISSIONARY**

In the pastors notes column in the same issue Pastor Guerry told of a letter from Deacon Chairman, Dr. A. M. Lang, describing his experience in the foreign mission field where he served as medical doctor in the Sudan Interior Mission Hospital in Galmi Niger Republic in Africa. The hospital was described as the only one within 100 miles. Dr. Lang was the only physician there at the time and in his words "Our 110 beds stay full."

## **NEWS FROM ENGLAND**

In the November 21, 1974 Church Week, Mr. Jack Campbell, Minister of Music, shared a letter from Mr. and Mrs. J. O. Jones of the Corby England Baptist Church which read, in part: "The time is getting nearer for Mr. and Mrs. Benfield to leave us. We shall miss them very much as they have captured our hearts completely. The work they have done since they have been with us has been wonderful and naturally we have come to love them very much. You in Morganton must have missed them while they have been here, but you have the comfort that they are coming back to you and we shall be left with many loving memories of the wonderful times we have spent with them. May God bless you as a church for lending them to us for a time. Yes, they've meant a lot to us and we thank God for all they have done for us, and especially for us personally. God bless you all."

Sincerely,  
J. O. and Lettie Jones

## **BENFIELDS RETURN**

The Church Week of November 28, 1974 recorded the return home of the Benfields. They



promised that a letter would be forthcoming from the Corby church to reinstate them in their home church. Mr. Benfield was scheduled to preach in the Sunday morning service for the first time since his retirement. They were planning to make a slide presentation on that Sunday evening service to illustrate their joint report to the church family.

However, Providence intervened and on December 5 the paper corrected the earlier announcement with this one: "Because of a change in last Sunday's service made necessary by the snow storm Mr. Benfield will speak on Sunday morning December 15 and the couple will make their slide talk on Wednesday, December 11. Following the program on that evening a reception will be held in honor of the Benfield couple in the church parlor."

### **PASTOR EMERITUS BENFIELD**

During the December 15 service, Pastor Guerrey presented Mr. Benfield a plaque confirming the congregation's vote to name him Pastor Emeritus.

### **NECROLOGY 1974**

During the year 1974 these members of the Church passed away:

Mrs. Mae Mabry

Mrs. R. W. Pipkin

Mr. Bobby Phillips

Mr. Clarence Johnson

### **W.M.U. MEETING JANUARY 8, 1975**

The women of the W.M.U. enjoyed a program based upon the Benfield's service to the Baptist church in Corby, England.

### **LISTEN CHRISTIANS**

This was the title of several ironic lines placed in the News letter January 30, 1975.

"I was hungry  
and you formed a humanities club  
and discussed my hunger. Thank you...  
I was imprisoned  
and you crept off quietly...  
to your chapel in the cellar and prayed for  
my release.  
I was naked...  
and in your mind you debated  
the morality of my appearance.  
I was homeless...  
and you preached to me of  
the spiritual shelter of the Love of God.  
I was lonely...  
and you left me alone to pray for me.  
You seem so holy; so close to God...  
but I'm still very hungry,  
and lonely...and cold."

### **KINDERGARTEN KORNER**

In the early 70's a great deal of information on the affairs of pre-school children was provided in a column entitled Kindergarten Korner. In the growing pre-school department, under the guidance of Mrs. Margaret Sellers, the services of a variety of public agencies were visited by pre-schoolers who would not have come to be informed until later in their school careers but for the exciting experiences of seeing firemen, policemen and others in their places of work at the very impressionable age of these youngsters. They learned much about safety, nature, seasonal changes, etc. Such exposure to the

environment gave them an advantage when they were introduced to public schools.

## **ADULT BIBLE STUDY**

The church records reflect a strong interest in Bible study during mid-week periods of instruction led by Pastor Guerry. He gave us all a probing look at scriptures.

## **FBC DELEGATES TO BAPTIST WORLD ALLIANCE**

The fellowship was notified in July 1975 of a journey of two of our number in this paragraph from Church Week: "Mrs. Elizabeth Walker and Mrs. Robert Fritz left on Wednesday for New York for their flight to Brussels, London, Copenhagen and then to Stockholm Sweden to attend the Baptist World Alliance Congress which will be held there. We wish them God-speed and pray God's blessing and direction upon the deliberations on the Congress."

## **TTY UNIT NOW HERE**

The growing interest in promotion of the well being of the deaf community in our fellowship was recently evidenced by this piece of good news: "Our church office is now equipped with a TTY unit for telephonic communication with the deaf members of our church and every family in the community with deaf members. This piece of equipment will enable our church to provide a more directly helpful ministry to the deaf."

## **BILL HALL CALLED TO CHAPLAINCY**

In the pastor's notes on September 11, 1975 we read: "What remained so long in the realm of idea, finally became reality. Western Carolina Correctional Center now has a full time Chaplain on its staff. The Rev. William Hall began his work on August 18. Mr. Hall was selected from a field of several applicants and was offered the position after extensive interviews with the local selection committee appointed by the Morganton City Ministerial Association where the project began about two years ago.

This news resulted in the Bill Hall family uniting with our church family. They came from the First Baptist Church of Danville, Virginia.

## **INTER-CHURCH SERVICE**

During the first week in October, our church had as guests, the membership of the First Presbyterian for Sunday evening services in the first of several planned ecumenical services among several Morganton churches. The Rev. John McCoy, their pastor, was speaker of the evening. A period of refreshments and fellowship followed the meeting.

## **BILL HALL CALLED TO FILL IN**

Our new member, Rev. Bill Hall was asked to serve as Mr. Guerry's substitute on the second Sunday morning of October 1975. Mr. Guerry was away from Morganton to serve as Homecoming preacher at the Hoffman Baptist Church, Hoffman, N.C., the church he served as Seminary Pastor.

## **SECOND INTER-CHURCH SERVICE**

On the second Sunday night in October 1975, the second inter church service was held. Our church was guests of the Morganton Lutheran Church. Pastor John Sigmon was preacher. Again, a pleasant period of refreshments and fellowship was held after the pastor's sermon.

## **THIRD INTER-CHURCH SERVICE**

The third service was held at the St. Charles Catholic Church with pastor Father Thomas Burke as speaker. Following Rev. Mr. Burke's sermon a period of fellowship and refreshments was observed.

## **FOURTH AND FINAL INTER-CHURCH SERVICE**

The fourth and final ecumenical gathering was held on November 13, 1975 with the First United Methodist Church as hosts, and with Mr. Robert Ralls as speaker. This service too was followed by fellowship and refreshments.

## **MISS CAM THOMAS**

### **ORGANIST NOVEMBER 6, 1975**

Miss Cam Thomas recently added to our staff as Church Organist and music assistant, had resigned to be married on December 27, 1975. She and her husband were to be enrolled in the graduate school of the University of Illinois.

## **MR. G. M. HILL, SR.**

The December 4, 1975 Church Week recorded the notice of the death of Mr. Hill on November 25, 1975. During a very busy life as business man, he found time to make many contributions of service in Kingdom causes. He served in many ways in his home church as well as in the Baptist State Convention. He was a member of the Wake Forest University Board of Trustees. Evidence of his many services in our own church is the visual and auditory quality of the choir loft. During several meetings of the Building Committee during early planning stages, it was Mr. Hill's gentle but firm persuasion that a conservative Building Committee finally agreed to the beautiful semi-circular loft instead of a very shallow, much less costly loft made up of close packed pews in parallel rows. He suggested that we should never regret the decision in light of the superior eye and ear appeal that would result. This is only one of the many decisions the Committee was to make under his wise guidance.

## **NECROLOGY 1975**

During the church year 1975 the following members passed away:

Mrs. R. W. Hutchins	Mr. Jacob Mabe
Mrs. Fred Penland	Mrs. Handley Fincher
Mrs. Carrie Beach	Mrs. Virginia Moore
Mrs. A. E. Jones	Mrs. John P. Williams
Mrs. H. G. Easom	Mr. Jeter Morgan
Mr. G. M. Hill, Sr.	Mrs. Ransom Fox, Jr.
Mrs. W. P. Phillips	Mr. Paul Rhyne
Mr. W. P. Phillips	

## **PIANO GIFT**

In late 1975 Mrs. Annie Walker donated a Cable Baby Grand Piano to the church.

## **REV. B. E. WHITE, JR.**

### **REVIVALIST 1976**

On April 4, 1976 the fellowship was informed that the Rev. Brightie E. White, Jr. would serve as revival preacher for the spring revival series. Mr. White had been the pastor of the Elizabeth City, N.C. First Baptist Church for several years. The series of services began on Sunday, April 4 and ran through Thursday, April 8 at the 7:30 P.M. service. Mr. White grew up in Morganton and determined that he would be a minister early in his life.

## **RESIGNATION OF REV. ED LANDRUS**

On July 29, 1976 Mr. Ed Landrus, Minister of Education, resigned to accept a position with Providence Baptist in Charlotte. His letter of resignation expressed his feeling upon leaving in these words: "I am thankful that I have had the opportunity to be a part of this fellowship for a number of years." Of Landrus' departure he wrote: "We hold Ed and his family in great affection and will miss



them very much. At the same time we are aware that the experience of growth brings new opportunities for service. We affirm Ed in his response to God's leadership in his life and for that reason we share in his joy. To the Landrus family we say we love you and pray God's blessings on you."

## **HAROLD MCKINNEY HOME**

In choir news, of August 5, 1976 it is written: "Welcome back Harold McKinney who has been on the other side of the world in Taichung, Taiwan, Republic of China for the past two years, playing in the Taiwan Symphony, teaching trombone privately and teaching in the Christian Academy in Taichung."

We are proud of Harold and his ministry through music. On Sunday morning Harold will share his musical gifts with us as he plays the trombone, accompanied by Mary Frances Whitener, organist.

## **TOGETHER IN SEPTEMBER**

### **1976 FIRST OF A SERIES**

The First Baptist, First Presbyterian and First Methodist churches jointly announced in late August a series of Sunday evening services under a program entitled "Together in September". The three dates are September 12, 19, and 26 of 1976. On each occasion the speaker for the combined congregations was to be chosen by one of the three to speak in the sanctuary of one of the three. So, on the program for September 12 the Presbyterians chose Dr. J. Randolph Taylor, Pastor of the Myers Park Presbyterian Church of Charlotte to speak to the three congregations in the First United Methodist Church. On September 19, the First Baptist Church's selection, of Dr. L. D. Johnson, chaplain of Furman University, was scheduled to speak on September 19 to the congregations in the sanctuary of the First Presbyterian Church. Finally, on September 26, Dr. William Holmes Borders, pastor of the Wheat St. Baptist Church of Atlanta, GA was invited by the First Methodist Church to the gathering in the sanctuary of the First Baptist Church.

The music for each meeting was provided by a combined choir of the participating churches. And, the young people of the three met together for supper and fellowship of the host church before the services began.

## **LANDRUS RECEPTION**

The church staff promoted a reception for the Landrus family on Sunday evening August 29, 1976. In response the Landruses wrote this note of thanks: "Dear Friends of First Baptist Church: Please accept our thanks for the beautiful plaque and the generous love gift you presented to us. The memory of your generosity and the love and support you have given us through these years will long be remembered by our family.

We will pray that God will be generous with His blessings on such wonderful people and we will always feel that it was a rich privilege to have known and loved and shared the Lord's work with each of you.

Gratefully and prayerfully,  
Ed and Carolyn Landrus,  
Rhoda, Kathryn and Margaret

## **KINDERGARTEN KORNER**

### **SEPTEMBER 9, 1976**

In the September 9, 1976 issue of Church Week a staff member inserted this interesting piece: "I am important. I have a name that is all my own that was given to me when I was born. There is no one else in the world like me. My family loves me. My teacher loves me. My friends love me and God loves me. I like me too. In what ways am I like my friends? In what ways am I different?

My body is important -- all parts of my body. Now I am learning about hands. What can I do with my hands? Make music, clap, tap, snap, rub, squeeze, push, pull, knock, hit, stroke, open, shut, feel, and love. I hope I use my hands well. They can tell me whether things are rough, smooth, big,

little, hard, soft, round, square and many other things. Thank you, God, for hands."

## **REV. F. A. BOWER PASTOR, 1917**

In the September 30, 1976 issue of Church Week the pastor shared a portion of a letter he received from Pastor Emeritus F. A. Bower. He and Mrs. Bower were living in retirement at Penny Farms, Florida. He expressed his continuing love for our church and interest in all that the church was doing. He pledged his constant prayers for the church. At that time Mrs. Bower was confined to the infirmary. September 29, 1976 marked the 67th anniversary of the Bowers' wedding. The rest home celebrated the occasion with an open house celebration. At that time Mr. Bower was 94 and Mrs. Bower was 89. In closing the letter Mr. Bower said that their pledge card was enclosed indicating a tithe of their income for the next church year. This was a very short while before the couple passed away.

## **MRS. WALKER ORDAINED AS DEACON**

On October 7, 1976 Mrs. Elizabeth Walker's ordination, as Deacon of the First Baptist Church, was announced.

## **YOUNG PEOPLE SINGERS AT WESTERN CAROLINA CENTER**

On October 2, 1976 a very meaningful letter to Mr. Jack Campbell, Minister of Music was printed in the Church Week, relative to a Sunday evening October 3 musical program by the Chapel and Crusader Choirs for the children at the Western Carolina Center.

Dear Jack:

We would like to express our appreciation for the program your youth choirs provided for our residents. We were impressed by the calibre of young people in your group. You can be proud of the example they project. They are all excellent representatives of the First Baptist Church. You can be proud of them for that. We were especially impressed by the interaction between your youth and our residents. Their music was very well presented but the greatest impression they made was as they pushed wheelchairs and took time to talk with the residents. They gave of their time, themselves and their talents. What greater gift can be given? On behalf of the residents of the Western Carolina Center thank you for an evening well spent.

Sincerely yours,  
Ralph Miller, Chaplain

## **NECROLOGY 1976**

During the year 1976 a total of six members passed away:

Mr. William Bowman

Mrs. Tom Shirley

Mrs. Myrtle Nowlin

Mrs. Charles Reid

Mr. B. L. McGinnis

Mrs. William Ward

## **THE PERFECT CHURCH**

In early January 1977 the pastor had this anonymous piece inserted in the Pastor's column of the Church Week

I think that I shall never see  
A church that's all it ought to be;  
A church whose members never stray  
Beyond the straight and narrow way;  
A church that has no empty pews;  
Whose pastor never has the blues;  
A church whose deacons always deak

And none is proud and all are meek;

A church where gossips don't tell lies  
Or make complaints or criticize;  
Where all are always sweet and kind  
And all to others fault are blind.

Such perfect churches there may well be,  
But none of them are known to me;  
But still we'll work and pray and plan  
To make our own the best we can.

Author Unknown

## **MR. JACK CAMPBELL ON HYMNS**

In January 1977 Mr. Campbell, Minister of Music, wrote one of his frequent educational columns which is worthy of inclusion here:

"Down through the centuries hymns have been used, not only to convey our feelings of adoration, worship and praise to God but as vehicles to express theological or doctrinal concepts.

For the American colonists hymns both improved the worship and provided good teaching. Many of Charles Wesley's hymns written about this time were written to carry the theme of particular church meetings.

John Wesley, his brother, recycled some, revised others and used them again and again. In 1761 he wrote 'above all, sing spiritually. Have an eye on God in every word you sing. Aim at pleasing Him more than yourself, or any other creature. In order to do this, attend strictly to the sense of what you sing and see that your heart is not carried away with the sound but carried to God continually.' What wonderful advice for all of us.

Most of our congregation are good learners and are willing to learn hymns they have not grown up with. Because of this, our people have a better than average knowledge of our hymns and are to be commended for your spirit in singing the hymns and in your acquaintance with a wide selection of hymns."

## **MR. CAMPBELL ON "AMEN"**

On February 3, 1977 Mr. Campbell took occasion to inform the congregation on a subject that caused some confusion among the people. His subject was the use of the word Amen at the close of hymns.

"The word Amen is a Hebrew word meaning 'verily' or 'truly'. One way it was used in ancient Israel was to confirm the praise of God in response to a doxology as in I Chron. 16:36, or Psalm 41:13. Amens since that time have generally followed doxologies. (Editor's note - "Praises to God.")

The word does not appear at the end of every hymn in every hymnal. Why is this? Luther wrote hymns that were published without amens; metrical versions of psalms were sung without amens; many hymns of Wesley and Watts were published without amens.

When 19th century translations of Greek and Latin Hymns were published, amens were added after doxologies which closed most of these hymns. This began a trend to add amens to all hymns, meaning 'so be it,' or expressing affirmation of the words which have been sung. Many hymnals do use them to conclude all hymns."

## **ENERGY CRISIS, 1977**

The congregation voted unanimously to cancel all evening activities in the church beyond 6 pm in response to Governor Hunt's request that schools, churches and businesses restrict their hours of operation "in order to conserve energy during this critical period."



## **ROBERT RUSSELL FAMILY VISITS**

The Personnel Committee and the Deacons urged all members to attend services on the upcoming Sunday to meet the Russell family immediately after the service. The Personnel Committee will make a recommendation on February 27 that Mr. Russell be called as Minister of Education.

## **TOM SHIRLEY**

This note was in the Church Week on February 17, 1977.

### **Scouts Honor Tom Shirley**

At the morning service on last Sunday Tom Shirley was recognized for 35 years of service to the Boy Scouts. Scout Master Jim Lowdermilk presented Tom with a plaque which read:

In Grateful appreciation for 35 years of service  
to Troop 184, First Baptist Church

The church joins with the Scouts in expressing congratulations and appreciation to Mr. Tom Shirley.

## **PASTORAL FAMILY TO ENGLAND**

On March 10, 1977 Pastor Guerry told of a plan that had been in the making for several weeks under which the Guerry family would go to England to live for a while. They would reside in the home of Rev. and Mrs. Geoffrey Whitfield in the city of Brighton. At the same time the Whitfields would come to Morganton and occupy the home of the Guerrys, use the Guerry's car and "enjoy the friends of the Guerrys." The two preachers would exchange pulpits for a while. The plan bore the endorsement of the Deacons. The plan would involve no expense to the church. The time for the arrival of the Whitfields was set as July 1, 1977.

## **PASTOR LOOKS TO THE RUSSELL'S ARRIVAL**

On March 17 Pastor Guerry, looking forward to the arrival of recently called Minister of Education, recalled principles which retired, pastor Benfield had set forth for guidance of the congregation when the church was expecting the arrival of Mr. Guerry to succeed Mr. Benfield as pastor. Mr. Benfield's formula for answering the question "how can we as members of the First Baptist Church make our new pastor's ministry more effective?" was used. Then Mr. Guerry quoted from the Church Week the record of Mr. Benfield's advice, in part, as follows:

1. Build his spiritual power by praying for him.
2. Build his reputation by speaking well of him.
3. Build his morale by encouraging him.
4. Build his leadership by cooperating with him.

Mr. Guerry suggested that the church apply the same formula in the case of Mr. Russell.

## **RUSSELL FAMILY ARRIVAL**

On April 7, 1977 the Church Week announced the arrival of the Russells. The new staff member was asked to fill the pulpit on the following Sunday while Mr. Guerry was in revival meeting in the First Baptist Church of Lexington, N.C.

In the same issue of the news letter, Mr. Russell shared with the church his seven point goal of his teaching effort:

1. Christian conversions - provide each person with leadership to a genuine experience.
2. Christian membership - lead each Christian into an active, devoted membership in a New Testament Church.
3. Christian worship - to help each person to make worship a vital and constant part of an expanding experience.
4. Christian attitudes and appreciation - to lead in the development of these qualities.
5. Christian knowledge and convictions - to lead in development of these qualities.
6. Christian living - guide all persons in forming habits and skills to promote the ideal.
7. Christian service - to lead all to use talents and skills in service and witness.

## **DEATH OF MR. MAX POTEET**

In the June 16, 1977 issue of Church Week Mr. Campbell's column was devoted to a tribute to recently deceased Mr. Max Poteet. Mr. Campbell said, in part: "with the death of Max Poteet, a tower has fallen in our church music ministry. Having sung in the choir for 45 years he has made a contribution that is unique. Until very recently, he sang solos whenever needed. His was truly a first tenor voice, not only in range but in its very warm and pleasing quality as well.

A sense of humility and modesty prevailed in all that he did. He was a churchman in the finest sense, loving and supporting the total church ministry in general and the Music Ministry in particular. He served on the Church Music Committee intermittently for twenty years or more. He was ready to serve at all times.

To know him was to love him. Typical of his thoughtfulness of others, in leaving plans for his own funeral he asked that the choir not be asked to sing. He knew just how difficult it would be for the members of the choir. Instead he asked that the congregation join in a song, one of his favorites Dear Lord and Father of Mankind."

## **RUSSELLS IN TOWN AT LAST**

In his Church Week column on June 16, 1977 Mr. Russell announced that he would try to provide pastoral ministries while the Guerry family was in England, and with an almost audible sigh of relief he added: "Well, the Russell family has finally moved to Morganton, every table, chair and box of us. I am grateful for your understanding during this transition time. Come by and we'll give you a box to unpack."

## **GUERRY FAMILY TO ENGLAND**

The final plans for the Guerry family move to England were announced, on June 23, 1977. The time frame was to be six weeks as previously announced.

## **INTERPRETERS TO CONFERENCE**

On August 4, 1977 the Church Week published this letter of appreciation from two of the dedicated interpreters to the deaf persons in our congregation: "Thank you! We had many rewarding experiences at Glorietta during the Southern Baptist Conference of the deaf. These would not have been ours if you had not made our trip and stay there possible. Pray for us as we try to make our deaf ministry and church ministry what they should be.

Sincerely,  
Nancy Collins and Sally Dixon

## **GUERRY'S RETURN ANNOUNCED**

An August 11, 1977 Mr. Russell announced that the Pastoral family would return on the upcoming Sunday and urged the congregation to be present for the return from England.

## **TOGETHER IN SEPTEMBER, 1977**

The three dates for the services were announced as September 11, 18 and 25. Further details were promised at a later date.

## **THE PASTOR THANKS THE CHURCH**

On August 18 Mr. Guerry wrote to the church to express the family's appreciation for the return home reception and for the experiences of the trip. At the same time he said that the reception and attention given to the Whitfields would be talked about for a long time in Brighton, England.

## **CALL TO COMMITMENT**

In a book bearing this title, the author, Elizabeth O'Connor, says this about the call to the

commitment by a deacon: "Surely entrance into the Christian Church presupposes total commitment to Christ as Lord of the Church. A surrender to Christ is a surrender to His people - total involvement in the life of the church and the awareness that participation in this community of forgiveness and love means that we extend it to all mankind."

Based on these comments Pastor Guerry suggested that at least four characteristics should mark a deacon:

1. A relationship to God in Christ that is reflected in attitude and conduct.
2. A commitment to the church that is marked by faithfulness in worship, study and stewardship.
3. A willingness to minister in such a way that will strengthen the life and witness of the fellowship.
4. A concern for needs of persons, both spiritual and physical within the fellowship, the community and the world.

## **PROGRAM FOR TOGETHER IN SEPTEMBER**

On September 8, 1977 the program for the series was announced as follows:

First, on September 11, 7:30 P.M. at First Presbyterian Church, speaker Dr. John Burgland, Professor of Homiletics (the art of preaching) at Duke University, invited by the First United Methodist Church.

Second, on September 18, 7:30 P.M. with Dr. Albert G. Edwards, Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Raleigh as speaker, invited by the First Presbyterian Church, in the sanctuary of the First Baptist Church.

Third, on September 25 at 7:30 P.M. at the First United Methodist Church, with Dr. Dallas T. Stallings of the Chatham Baptist Church of Chatham, VA as speaker, at the invitation of the First Baptist Church.

Each of the three meetings was described as well attended and were excellent ecumenical fellowship experiences. In each case the host church served refreshments during a fellowship period after the service.

## **DEACON FAMILY MINISTRY APPRECIATED**

On November 17, 1977 Mr. Jack Campbell endorsed Deacon family ministry in this note entitled "It is in giving that you receive." An unexpected visit by my family Deacon, Charles Monroe and Mrs. Monroe one evening last week brought home to me the efficacy of our "Deacon family ministry." That warm, caring visit (not to mention the tasty pumpkin pie and flowers) reinforced in my thinking the conviction that ours is a great church. If each deacon is as effective in this ministry as is Charles, the "caring" arm of our church is greatly extended.

## **1977 NECROLOGY**

During the year 1977 these members of the fellowship died.

Mr. W. T. Berry

Mr. Max Poteet

Mrs. W. E. Butler

Mrs. Tressie Rathburn

## **IN MEMORIAM MR. R. O. HUFFMAN**

**FEBRUARY 2, 1978**

This notice was published in the February 9, 1978 Church Week. "Mr. R. O. Huffman served God very effectively for many years." Pastor Guerry added his personal comments in these words: "Over the past weekend we shared our sympathies with the Huffman family and as a church family. Robert O. Huffman was a committed Christian and a dedicated churchman whose contributions to the life of the First Baptist Church through the years have been permanently installed among us. We shall miss him but we will remember him with deep affection and gratitude."



## **N. C. BAPTIST HOMES**

An excerpt from a letter from M. R. L. Connor of the North Carolina Baptist Homes in Winston-Salem, NC was printed in the February 16, 1978 issue of the Church Week.

Dear Brother Wendell:

"On behalf of Rev. William A. Poole, our Executive Director and our Trustees, I want to thank you and your church for being the leading church in contributions from your association last year. It was one of the finest years we have had in our ministry to aging people and your church had a significant part in this ministry."

## **CHURCH COVENANT**

On February 23, 1978 the first notice of an effort to study the subject of a covenant for our church was announced. Then on the next Sunday night a follow up meeting was called for further consideration of the subject.

## **MRS. MINNIE REDDISH**

On April 13, 1978 the pastor inserted this note in the Church Week regarding Mrs. Reddish: "Minnie Huffman was born one year before our church was organized. Her birth time was April 14, 1878 when the Baptists were seeking a place in the heart of Morganton. Through the years of our lives together, as Mrs. Minnie Reddish, the wife of one of our former pastors, 1901-1904, she helped to bring to reality some of those Baptist dreams. Mrs. Reddish made a fine contribution to our music ministry during the time she played the organ for the church worship services. She has had a continuing influence on the music program in more recent times.

For many years Mrs. Reddish has been confined to her bed by illness and is constantly cared for by her friend Miss Minnie Smith. Speaking for the total congregation we all appreciate all that Mrs. Reddish has meant to the fellowship during the years and we pray God's special care on her 100th birthday this Friday."

(It is worthy of mention that two tremendous supports provided by the Reddish estate were: Funds for the purchase of the Sanctuary Organ and a major portion of the cost of the new Chapel came from the estate.)

## **WALKER ORDAINED**

This notice was in the news on July 27, 1978: "Ordination - Drew Walker, son of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Walker will be ordained to the gospel ministry this Sunday evening at 7:00 P.M. at the First Baptist Church, Asheville, NC. He would be pleased if some of the folks from his home church could attend his ordination."

## **TOGETHER IN SEPTEMBER '78**

On September 7, 1978 the inter-faith series of services was announced to commence on Sunday, September 10. The first meeting in September was held in the Sanctuary of the First Baptist Church with Rev. Dr. David Read, Pastor of the Madison Presbyterian Church of New York City at the invitation of the First Presbyterian Church.

On Sunday, September 17, 1978 at 7:30 P.M. the second in the series of September meetings was held in the Sanctuary of the First United Methodist Church with Dr. Julian Cave, Pastor of St. Johns Baptist Church of Charlotte as speaker. The speaker was invited by the First Baptist Church.

On Sunday, September 24 the service was held in the Sanctuary of the First Presbyterian Church. The speaker was Bishop Paul Hardin, Jr. of Charlotte, at the invitation of the First United Methodist Church.

The host church provided refreshments during the fellowship hour following the services.

## **JACK CAMPBELL ON MUSIC**

Mr. Campbell throughout his career as Minister of Music was an ardent supporter of the idea that music and choir participation provided values far beyond the spiritual experiences provided to listeners on Sunday mornings.

In a letter to the fellowship on August 10, 1978 he expressed himself on the subject in the following words: "A boys choir or any choir is an opinion forming organization - one which attempts to build Christian character through a group experience involving great music and texts which speak of mankind's concepts of God, his relationship to Him, his praise, thanksgiving and adoration of Him and his personal redemptive encounter with His son Jesus Christ.

A child's basic character is thought to be formed in the first few years of his life. His thought patterns, tastes and sense of value are at their most impressionable stage. In fact, many educators feel that music is one of the best tools for learning and that through awakening of his musical responses the child's total learning capacities are vastly increased."

Throughout his career at the First Baptist Church Mr. Campbell went far beyond the point of producing performers who could render pleasing and worshipful music; he taught in an effective way and in the process instilled in his pupils an appreciation of good music that became a lasting part of their lives. The two decades of Mr. Campbell's ministry were, in the words of his successor, a tough act to follow. (Incidentally, his successor, Mr. Bill Rotan has been a sterling successor of Mr. Campbell.)

## **CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS**

On November 2, 1978 Pastor Guerry announced the approaching vote on November 5 on the long discussed Church Constitution and By-laws. At the same time the pastor reiterated a firm traditional Baptist principle of soul freedom. This means that every believer is competent before God in matters of personal faith. When this principle is logically extended to the body of believers, we have the frame work for our lives together as a church. Historically Baptists have never been a "creedal" people. We have insisted that subscription to a creed would violate the principle of church autonomy and soul freedom which we hold dear.

The fellowship adopted the covenant which the pastor noted on November 9 in these words: Sunday was a significant day in the 99 year life of our church. We adopted a constitution and by-laws and gave renewed expression of our identity through a new church covenant.

## **OUR COVENANT**

Confessing our faith in God the Father, who has made himself known to us through His Son Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord, and believing that He has called us together in the fellowship of His Holy Spirit, we do now make this covenant with God and with one another.

We will be faithful in worship, gathering with the church family to celebrate God's Presence, to experience His Word and to remember His grace.

We will commit ourselves to Christian growth through diligent study of the scriptures and regular prayer.

We will be responsible stewards of all we are and all we have, giving time, influence, and resources to the support of the church and its ministries.

We will earnestly endeavor to pattern our homes after Christ's love for the church and to nurture our families in the faith.

We will encourage one another in love and good works, and through ministries of prayer and presence will share one another's burdens and joys.

We will be a servant church, following the example of our Lord, and will bear witness to His grace in word and in deed.

We will seek God's help in striving to so live in this community and the world that others may be drawn to our Saviour and Lord.

We will be God's people wherever we are, living for the glory of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

AMEN

--Adopted by Congregation of First Baptist Church  
Morganton, NC November 5, 1978

## **CHURCH HOSTESSES**

Mrs. Joyce Evans served as church hostess for about five years as the first full time staff member. She did an excellent job and established a high standard of excellence. She had to resign for reasons of her health. While the church family regretted that illness made it necessary for Mrs. Evans to resign, we were all grateful to Mrs. Alice Deaton for filling the void.

## **TRIBUTE TO MR. CAMPBELL**

In his message from the pastor on November 22, 1978 Mr. Guerry expressed his feeling for Mr. Jack Campbell in these words: "Edmund Spenser once wrote that 'the gentle mind by gentle deeds is known.' That phrase is somehow descriptive of Jack Campbell who has been a gentle mind in our midst during these 20 years of ministry. He has labored among us during these twenty years in love and his influence has touched many lives. We are proud to honor him on this significant anniversary.

Jack is not only a competent musician, he is a sensitive minister as well. His genuine concern for persons has been reflected in many ways. He has shared himself beyond the requirements of his work. His keen sense of the holy has made him an effective model of true worship. His warm and genial spirit has endeared him to his fellow staff members. This church's affection for Jack, Martha and the family has been demonstrated. I only want to add my own expression of love and appreciation for all that they mean to the life of our fellowship. I am proud to be their pastor and friend."

## **NECROLOGY 1978**

During the past year the following members have passed away:

Mrs. F. A. Bower	Mr. Ben McFadden
Mrs. Dan Avery	Mrs. T. C. Miller
Mrs. Thelma Carpenter	Mrs. Minnie Moses
Mrs. Virginia Conley	Mrs. Minnie Reddish
Mr. H. S. Fleming	Mr. Earl Sluder
Dr. J. B. Helms	Mrs. John Stratton
Mr. R. O. Huffman	Mr. Lee Wakefield
Mrs. Rowena La Choat	Mrs. Tiena Walker
Mrs. Fred Lane	Mrs. S. A. Williams

## **FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH CENTENNIAL**

Pastor Guerry in looking toward the time of the Centennial in October 1979 called attention of the fellowship in early January 1979 that just as Paul in Hebrews reminded his readers "we are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses" so are we the members of the First Baptist Church, a part of those who have gone on before us. Who we are in 1979 has been determined in part by the christians of 1879 who organized the church we know as The First Baptist Church of Morganton. In a very real sense they live in us and are an essential part of what we have become. On February 8, 1979 the pastor outlined progress being made for a Centennial celebration on September 30, 1979.

## **MR. JACK CAMPBELL**

### **RESIGNS MAY 3, 1979**

The Church Week notified the membership that Mr. Jack Campbell had resigned. The announcement was accompanied by a lengthy letter setting forth his regrets that he was no longer able to meet the challenge of the position of Minister of Music. His letter was dated April 30, 1979.



## **EUROPEAN ECUMENICAL CHRISTIANS TOUR**

On May 10, 1979 it was announced that a group of 38 persons from Morganton would go on a tour of Europe to visit places of historical interest to Christians. The company included 12 members of First Baptist Church and 26 others: Baptist, Presbyterians, Methodists, Episcopalians and Lutherans.

## **BOB RUSSELL RESIGNED**

On May 9, 1979 Mr. Robert Russell, Minister of Education announced his resignation to accept a call for service at Calvary Baptist Church of Roanoke, VA. Mr. Russells final day of service to First Baptist Church was June 3, 1979. The church attended a farewell reception for the Russell family.

## **CENTENNIAL CORNER**

With the approach of the Centennial celebration the Church Week was assigned to devote a corner to items of significant interest in the past century. On May 31 this item was reprinted from the local newspaper: "December 13, 1893. At 2:00 A.M. a disastrous fire wiped out much of what was Morganton's business district, including the Baptist Church along with most of its records.

## **CENTENNIAL CORNER**

**JUNE 7, 1979**

The church paid rent of \$1.25 for the use of the town hall after the fire of 1893 destroyed the church building.

## **CENTENNIAL CORNER**

**JUNE 14, 1979**

The brick church on South King Street was formally occupied on July 14, 1895.

## **CENTENNIAL CORNER**

**JULY 12, 1979**

The Centennial quilt committee looks forward to completion and hanging of the quilt by or before September 30, 1979. In the same note the Cookbook Committee was anticipating the arrival of the book containing 545 Baptist recipes. Also, the membership grew to 204 persons by 1899.

## **MR. BENFIELD IN PULPIT**

Mr. R. Knolan Benfield, Pastor Emeritus, filled the pulpit on January 29, 1979.

## **SALE OF REDDISH HOUSE**

During the week of August 2, 1979 the sale of the Reddish Home across Union Street from the church, and left to the church in Mrs. Reddish's will, was announced. The high bid was made by Mr. Carl Wall, Sr., in the amount of \$64,060. The sale was finalized shortly after August 2.

## **MRS. HAMLETT DECEASED**

The church was notified of the passing of Mrs. Lettie Hamlett on July 19, 1979 in San Angelo, Texas. She was a missionary for about 41 years from 1909 to 1950. She was a sister of Mrs. Charles Ernest Walker, our own beloved "Miss Annie."

## **TOGETHER IN SEPTEMBER**

**1979 (IN BRIEF)**

On August 23, 1979 the Together in September schedule was published. September 9 at the First Presbyterian Church; on the 16th at First United Methodist; on the 23rd at First Baptist. At the Presbyterian the speaker was Dr. Randall Lolly, president of the Southeastern Baptist Seminary, a guest of First Baptist. At the First United Methodist the speaker was Dr. Ernest Campbell, former

pastor of the Riverside Church of N. Y. City, a guest of the First Presbyterian Church. The speaker at the First Baptist Church was Dr. Bevel Jones, pastor of the First United Methodist Church of Athens, GA.

The offerings received at these meetings were applied first to defray expenses, including travel and honoraria. Any funds beyond the foregoing were applied to four local ministries: BUCM, United Christian Shelter Home and Flynn Christian Fellowship Home.

## **PASTORS THOUGHTS ON CENTENNIAL**

Pastor Guerry remarked: "When our church celebrated its 60th anniversary, I was more than a week old. Now, having passed over the hill marked "40", I take heart from Robert Brownings optimistic claim that 'the best is yet to be.'" He is moved to assess his own place among this people of the First Baptist Church of Morganton, and how far this Church had come before he joined its staff. He is filled with a sense of gratitude when he considers the privilege of serving in the tradition of the 19 pastors who preceded him, of whom 17 led this people before he was born. He concludes this line of thought with this paragraph: "In many ways this centennial celebration should have a profound impact on our life together and on our sense of mission. We are 100 years old this month but don't let anyone tell you that we are "over the hill." By God's grace we have only begun.

## **FIRST SANCTUARY RE-DECORATION**

During the week of September 20, 1979 the Church borrowed \$30,000 to redecorate the Sanctuary. The committee in charge of the work expressed the hope that the membership would increase giving by 15% to pay the loan off by years end.

## **CENTENNIAL SUNDAY**

**SEPTEMBER 30, 1979**

9:30 - 10:30

Coffee hour for the membership and guests in Fellowship Hall.

10:30 - Noon

Worship service - Sanctuary.

Recognition of special guests.

Special music by the choirs.

Message by the pastor.

12:00 Noon

Homecoming Dinner

Bring a well filled basket for your family and guests; the church will provide beverages.

Nursery will be provided from 9:30 until after dinner.

Please note: Because of extra length of worship service there will be no Sunday School on Centennial Sunday.

The foregoing is a copy of the program as printed in the Church Week.

## **CENTENNIAL CORNER**

**SEPTEMBER 27, 1979**

The First Baptist Church is credited with having the first W. M. U. in the Association. In 1971 a three octave set of English Handbells cast by Whitechapel Bell Foundry of London, England was presented to the church by the family of Mr. Ralph Clarke as a memorial to him.

## **TOM SHIRLEY**

The Church Week of October 11, 1979 contained a note to congratulate Mr. Shirley for his fiftieth anniversary of membership in the Huffman Bible Class.

## **MR. F. A. BOWER**

**PASTOR EMERITUS**

A note in the Church Week of December 13, 1979 told of Mr. Bowers 98th birthday December 13, 1979.

## **NECROLOGY 1979**

During the year 1979 the following persons died:

Mrs. William Phillips

Mr. Albert Prestwood

Mrs. Homer Biggers

Mrs. Moran Harbison

Mr. James Laney

## **PASTOR EMERITUS BENFIELD**

In the Church Week of January 17, 1980 Mr. R. Knolan Benfield was pictured alongside a story which he was described as "honorary chairman" of a state wide conference which was to meet on February 4-5 in Greensboro. It was noted that the meeting was to deal with the subject of Evangelism. The story told that Mr. Benfield had been very active through out his long career in Baptist affairs. At the same time the story told of Mrs. Benfields work in the State Convention.

## **WILLIAM E. ROTAN AND FAMILY TO VISIT**

On January 31, 1980 the following announcement was printed in the Church Week: Mr. W. E. Rotan and family will visit our church on Sunday. They come at the invitation of the Music Committee and the Pastor. The congregation will be invited to a reception to meet them immediately after morning service.

On Sunday February 10 the Music Committee will make a recommendation concerning the calling of Mr. Rotan as our Minister of Music.

All members of the church family are encouraged to be present to meet the Rotans this Sunday morning and to attend the special Church Conference on the following Sunday.

## **PASTOR'S COMMENT ON THE ROTANS**

In a note to the church on January 31 Mr. Guerry said: "Did you read the good news on page one about our special week-end guests? I am eager for you to meet the Rotans. Bill and his wife Nancy Ann are looking forward to meeting you as are their three boys John age 10, Aaron age 9 and David age 4. Those who have already met them have told them of how warm and caring a church you are.

Bill has several years of proven competence in the Ministry of Music. He prepared for his calling at Mars Hill College and at Southern Seminary in Louisville. Bill's father was a pastor in service to several North Carolina churches.

The search committee and I feel that under God's guidance we have been led to Bill Rotan and in that confidence we will introduce him to the Church on Sunday.

Our search for a minister of education continues. This process, too, has taken several months. I am confident, nevertheless, that in good time we will find the person of God's choosing for this ministry. Please continue to pray for the committee in their work.

## **REFUGEE FAMILY**

Several months prior to early February 1980 the church voted to sponsor a refugee family. It was necessary to wait for word from the Home Mission Board relative to the assignment of a family to our church. Early in February the Board indicated that they were ready to bring a family to Morganton.

The project assumed sizeable proportions and would involve many people to control it. Committees were formed to cope with the problems at hand.

Among other concerns were the following: housing, household items, food, clothing, employment, schooling, transportation, medical care, English instruction, friendships, finance and others. The pastor urged the fellowship to volunteer for service.



## **BILL ROTAN ACCEPTS THE CALL**

In a special Church Conference on Sunday morning, February 10, 1980 the church voted to extend a call to Mr. William E. Rotan as our Minister of Music. The call was accepted as indicated in his letter to the pastor:

Dear Wendell:

In response to your Church's call of February 10, 1980 I am pleased to accept the position of Minister of Music in the First Baptist Church of Morganton, effective March 17, 1980.

I want always to follow God's leadership in all of life and I feel this is another step in that following. Therefore, it is with great excitement and anticipation that I accept the position.

I look forward to a meaningful and happy relationship with the congregation and the staff and I am deeply appreciative of all the kindness and support already shown me and my family.

Sincerely,  
Bill Rotan

## **THANKS TO MR. JOHN MODE**

John Mode who served so well as interim leader of the music program was thanked and praised by the pastor in a letter dated February 21, 1980. In the same letter Mr. Guerry expressed appreciation to Libby Cecil for her work with the graded choir program.

## **REFUGEE FAMILY ARRIVES**

The church was notified on March 6, 1980 that the refugee family would arrive at the Asheville Airport on the next Thursday evening. The family consisted of the mother Kong Launry, and two sons Boummy 20 and Enoy 13. They had been living in a refugee camp in Thailand for over a year but were natives of Laos. Further details will be published in the Church Week when available.

## **ENTER FRED L. SCHUSZLER**

On May 22, 1980 Pastor Guerry, in his letter to the fellowship said "In a few weeks Fred Schuszler will be starting his work as our summer youth director. This weekend he will attend a youth workers conference at Southeastern Seminary. We are looking forward to having Fred as a staff member this summer and are grateful for his availability and willingness."

## **APPRECIATION OF THE DEAF BY PASTOR GUERRY**

Mr. Guerry had a genuine and positive interest in the deaf members of the church. He developed a deeper insight when he worked very closely with them in preparation of requirements for his D. Min. degree at the Southeastern Seminary. In his "Word from the Pastor" column on June 15, 1980 he cited a 17th century writer's use of the word calamity to describe deafness. While that might have been an apt appraisal at the writer's time, he went on to say that such a word does not fit the deaf persons with whom we are acquainted through the First Baptist Church. Their enthusiasm for their church and their faithful participation in its life adds to this fellowship a special dimension in its life. deafness a calamity? Not here!!

## **PROPHETIC INSIGHT OF PASTOR GUERRY**

In writing to the Church on June 12, 1980, Pastor Guerry made an appraisal of the state of affairs among Southern Baptists which seemed to foretell what has happened since then up to the present time. In writing of the upcoming convention in St. Louis he said: "some feel that the very integrity of the Christian Faith is at stake and will be determined by the theological position of those

who lead us as a Convention, both officers and denominational employees. Others believe that the more crucial issue is the historical Baptist insistence on christian freedom under the leadership of the Holy Spirit."

### **PASTOR EMERITUS DECEASED**

On July 31, 1980 the death of Rev. M. F. A. Bower was announced. Pastor Guerrey, in his letter to the church said: "The First Baptist Church is saddened by the death of Pastor Emeritus F. A. Bower. He was the pastor of this church first in the year 1917 and he served as interim pastor on two other occasions. He would have been 99 years old in this December. We thank God for all that he meant to this church and to the work of the Kingdom."

### **C. C. HARRELL DECEASED**

The death of Mr. Harrell was announced on August 7, 1980. Mr. Harrell was a generous man in supporting Kingdom causes. He spent much time in working toward the building of the new church and was a substantial contributor to the cause. He was also a contributor to the growth of his Alma Mater, Mars Hill College. A building on that campus bears his name.

### **TOGETHER IN SEPTEMBER**

**1980**

The 1980 series of inter-denominational meetings was the fifth one in as many years. On September 7 the people met in the First United Methodist Church. Dr. Eugene Owens, pastor of Myers Park Baptist Church of Charlotte, NC, was the speaker. He came upon invitation of the First Baptist Church. On September 14 in the First Baptist Church Sanctuary the speaker was Dr. Marshall F. Mauney, Pastor of the First Lutheran Church, Norfolk, VA, as guest of the First Lutheran Church. On September 21 at the First Presbyterian Church the speaker was Ms. Kara Pierce Hurley, Pastor of the Morehead United Methodist Church of Greensboro, at the invitation of the First United Methodist Church of Morganton. All of the sessions were well attended.

### **CALL OF FRED SCHUSZLER**

One of the most significant historical events of 1980 was the calling of Fred Schuszler as Minister of Education. Pastor Guerrey's enthusiastic endorsement of Fred was expressed in his letter to the church family, one which spoke for all members.

"The membership's vote on Sunday morning to call Fred Schuszler as Minister of Education brought to a close a year's work by the Search Committee. Milton Hoffman and the others on the Committee have given many hours in the process and they deserve our gratitude. They have been faithful in their task and they have worked carefully and effectively.

I am delighted that Fred will continue as a member of our church staff. During the summer months he has convincingly demonstrated his competence in youth ministry and his ability to function as a part of a team ministry. In his new role as Minister of Education Fred's work will be divided into four main areas of responsibility:

1. Development and direction of comprehensive program of church education.
2. Development and coordination of ongoing ministry of outreach.
3. Direct personal leadership in the church's youth program, and development of youth leadership among lay persons.
4. Assistance to the pastor in visitation, worship, leadership and counseling.

As you have shown encouragement and support to all of your church staff members throughout the years I know that you will undergird Fred's ministry with your prayers.

Wendell T. Guerrey

### **REFUGEE FAMILY DEPARTS**

After living in Morganton for almost six months the Laotian refugee family boarded a

Trailways bus for a 2 1/2 day trip to San Diego, California. Their departure was a disappointing time for the family and for members of the church who have spent a great deal of time and effort on their behalf. We must ask ourselves: "Were they ungrateful for the care and attention given them? Did they dislike it here?" Pastor Guerry could not suggest an answer to either question. He did say that they greatly missed their family who were a world away from them on the other side of the continent. The pastor suggested that we would continue to pray for them and thank God for the opportunity of service given to us in our short relationship with them. Only in such a spirit will we be able to respond should He offer another opportunity to us.

### **MR. F. ARTHUR HAZARD REMEMBERED**

Pastor Guerry in commenting on the beauty and architectural excellence of our church on September 25, 1980 took occasion to pay tribute to Mr. Hazard, our architect on his retirement after 68 years as architect. A major part of his professional life was devoted to creating Baptist church buildings in the south.

### **TRIBUTE TO A GREAT TEACHER**

On October 2, 1980 the Church Week printed a fine tribute to Mrs. Flora Cauble for her amazing career of teaching the Holy Bible for 60 years, over five generations of Baptists. She began teaching at the age of 18 years when some of her pupils were the age of her own mother. Her efforts were not confined to the church. She once taught a couples class in her home. They met once a week for two years and covered every word of the Bible from beginning to end. She was once involved in prison ministry. She was a choir member and often served as soloist. She frequently served as leader in midweek prayer meetings. Mrs. Cauble was honored at her 79th birthday celebration at a reception in the church parlor.

### **THE TWO MAHOGANY TABLES**

The two large tables, one in the library and one in the church office, were a gift from Mrs. Virginia Moore's estate by Mr. Moore. While active in the management of Drexel Furniture Co., Mrs. Moore secured two tropical American Mahogany boards, 16 feet long, six inches thick and 48" wide. They were made by expert woodworkers. These two pieces are well finished and should last as long as the church stands. While no one can verify it, they have been described as unique.

### **FRED SCHUSZLER ORDAINED**

On Sunday, November 23, 1980 at the morning worship hour, Fred Schuszler was ordained as a Minister. Dr. John Carlton, Professor of Preaching, Southeastern Seminary was speaker at the service.

### **F. A. HAZARD 1890-1980**

During the week of December 4, 1980 the church received notice of the death of Mr. F. A. Hazard who served as Architect for the planning of our new church building. Mr. Hazard often said that he considered our church as his best effort. He retired on his 90th birthday in September 1980.

### **1980 NECROLOGY**

Mrs. Doris Helms  
Miss Pearl Teeter  
Mrs. Belle Landis  
Mr. Dana Monroe  
Mrs. I. O. Cuthbertson  
Mr. Robert Hill

Mr. Felix Smith  
Mr. C. C. Harrell  
Mr. L. E. McFadden  
Rev. Mr. Fred A. Bower  
Mr. Carl Pollard  
Mr. Everett Pollard



## **WENDELL GUERRY RESIGNS AUGUST 1 EFFECTIVE DATE**

"Pastor Wendell Guerry resigns on August 1." This was the headline on the July 16, 1980 Church Week. "At the close of the morning service Mr. Guerry submitted his resignation to the church. He will be in our pulpit through the month of July 1981. Our prayers go with the Guerrys and the girls as they prepare to leave our fellowship."

Rev. Bill Rotan, the Senior Pastor following Mr. Guerry, commented in a statement headlined **CONCERN, GRATITUDE AND HOPE**: "Most days are filled with a mixture of genuine concern, expression of profound gratitude and reaffirmations of authentic hope. At no time in my ministry has the reality been in clearer focus than this past Sunday Morning.

Hearing the letter regarding the resignation of Rev. Guerry was a painful moment. Concerns scrambled into a corporate consciousness; concern for the Guerry family during these days of transition complimented by gratitude for this family's life in the church. I am grateful to God for this mans expressions of a faith sufficient for all situations.

Now, soon comes a time without a pastor. We can not deny the realization of critical concerns as we enter these days. Yet, hope is the content which characterizes christian ministry. I wonder what content we are made of? Time will tell."

Bill Rotan

## **RECEPTION FOR GUERRYS**

In the July 23, 1981 Church Week a reception for the Guerry family was announced to follow the next Sunday's worship. At the same time a love offering for the family would be received.

## **DEWEY HOBBS IN THE PULPIT AUGUST 2**

On Sunday August 2, Rev. Mr. Dewey Hobbs preached the morning service. Mr. Hobbs was pastor of the First Baptist Church of Marion for several years. Shortly before beginning his Ministry at Marion Mr. Hobbs conducted a revival meeting in our church.

## **REV. CHARLES ANDERSON IN THE PULPIT AUGUST 9**

Mr. Anderson who led the service on August 9, served as missionary with the Sudan Interior Mission, an Interdenominational Mission Society. He served more than 20 years in Ethiopia and 4 years in Ghana W. Africa. He is the son of Mrs. W. P. Anderson of our fellowship.

## **MRS. EVELYN DEES RESIGNS**

Mrs. Evelyn Dees, church secretary for many years, gave her letter of resignation to the Deacons on August 2, 1981. The effective date was to be "no later than August 21, 1981." The church expressed gratitude through the Deacons for Mrs. Dees good and faithful service for so many years.

## **MR. BENFIELD SUPPLIES**

On August 13 the church news announced that our pastor emeritus Rev. R. Knolan Benfield would serve as worship leader for the remaining Sundays in August 1981.

## **THE GUERRYS LETTER OF APPRECIATION**

On August 20, 1981 the Guerrys wrote the following letter to the Church Family:

Dear Friends --

Our family would like for you to know how grateful we are to you, our church, for the many kindnesses shown to us during this time of transition. Your generous love gift was overwhelming and your extension of my salary was far more than we had hoped for. We have been touched by the outpouring of your personal expressions of love and concern for our family, and for all of this we are

truly grateful.

We are now preparing to move to Charleston, SC to make our home there and to follow some new opportunities. We leave Morganton reluctantly for this has been our home. Never-the-less we leave with real appreciation for our years among you and for confidence for the future into which God will lead us.

Please continue to call our names in your prayers.

We love you,  
The Guerrys

## **A QUICK SUMMARY OF THE GUERRY YEARS AMONG US**

While it would be impossible to make an in depth summary, it is fair to say that interest in church affairs seemed to grow steadily during Mr. Guerry's eight years as our pastor. A few of the more significant changes in the day to day procedures were: We purchased a TTY communications system for communicating church to home with deaf members and encouraged the deaf members who could do so to put a system into their homes.

A program of midweek dinner meetings and Bible study was commenced. Mr. Ed Landrus, Minister of Education served as manager and chef at the outset. He was succeeded by Mrs. Douglas Evans. Our church was a founder of the Together In September series of interdenominational meetings which continued for six years. The first Deacon of the Week programs originated during the Guerry Era. The first formal program to observe Maundy Thursday in the Fellowship Hall was originated. The first program for permitting use of the church facilities to outsiders was adopted, under strict guidelines and under a system of fees. The first effective sound system for Sanctuary sound control was installed after a committee traveled around the state to inspect work done by others. The fellowship was very faithful to meet the budget during the eight years of Mr. Guerry's tenure. The Guerry family and the Whitfield family of Brighton, England exchanged homes, pulpits, automobiles and "friends" for several weeks in mid-July 1977.

## **TOGETHER IN SEPTEMBER 1981**

This Together in September series was the final of an annual program which started in 1976. The several years' services have drawn praise from a variety of critics. It has been generally conceded that all of the people involved have come to understand and appreciate the varying points of view of the denominations who have come together in the series.

The initial service in 1981 was at the First Baptist Church on September 13 with Dr. Lee Tuttle, retired general secretary of the world Methodist Council as speaker at the invitation of the Morganton First United Methodist Church. In the second service the host church was First Presbyterian. The speaker was Dr. Roger Lovett, Pastor of First Baptist Church of Clemson, SC as a guest of the First Baptist Church. The final meeting for 1981 was held at the First United Methodist Church with the speaker Dr. Albert Edwards, Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Raleigh as guest of the First Presbyterian Church of Morganton.

## **REV. ALBERT YOUNG OF HICKORY IN OUR PULPIT**

In the pulpit of our church on September morning 1981 we were glad to have Mr. Young as speaker at the morning service. Mr. Young is retired from the Viewmont Church in Hickory. Under his leadership during the period 1951-1978 a noteworthy record was compiled. The church received 2000 members; Sunday School grew from 300 to 1100; the budget grew from \$18,000 to \$200,00 a year.

## **PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE**

The special committee to search for a new pastor was made up of: Mr. Rance Henderson,

Chmn., Ron Black, Ray Alexander, Edna Weller, Merle Martin, Bob Henderson and Genie Bohler. The committee prepared a detailed questionnaire for the membership to fill out and return for their guidance. The inquiry asked the members to describe in detail just what they would desire in a new pastor. This was sent out on September 17 and was to be returned on October 1, 1981.

## **WE MEET WITH REV. MR. BOB D. SHEPHERD**

In the news of October 1, 1981 this paragraph appeared: Bob Shepherd Preaches in October; Rev. Bob Shepherd, Vice President for development at Gardner-Webb College will be our pulpit guest in October. Rev. Shepherd is from Athens, GA and holds degrees from Mercer University and the Southeastern Baptist Seminary, Wake Forest, NC. Before going to Gardner-Webb, Rev. Shepherd pastored churches in Georgia and North Carolina. The last church served in North Carolina was the First Baptist Church of Sanford, NC. Mr. Shepherd served as President of the General Board of N.C. and served on several key committees. He was very active in Red Cross, Boy Scouts and other activities. We welcome Mr. Shepherd to our pulpit.

## **REV. MR. KNOLAN BENFIELD CALLED**

In a called conference reported in the Church Week on October 8, the church family voted unanimously to call our retired Pastor, Mr. R. Knolan Benfield to serve as our interim pastor, until a new pastor could be called. This was to be effective on November 1, 1981. And, on October 29 the Church News editor extended a welcome to him.

## **NECROLOGY 1981**

During the church year 1981 the following members passed away:

Miss Mary K. Cox	Miss Bertie Taylor
Mrs. Eva Hines	Mrs. F. J. Wortman
Iris Hoffman	Mr. H. C. Tune
Mr. Lester McFadden	

## **A NOTE TO OUR YOUNG EDUCATION MINISTER**

While our new Minister of Education is certainly not on speaking terms with Satan, he did come upon a note, supposedly from the Devil and directed to: "Dear members and friends: I visited your Sunday school last Sunday and was overjoyed to see that so many of your people had not come. I noticed that less than a third of your resident membership is involved in studying the Bible. This makes me happy. (Bible study is such a dangerous thing.) I heard some lessons that were not well prepared and class members reported that they had made no visits or contacts for the week. That made my heart leap for joy. Then too, I chuckled with glee when I saw how many of your people did not stay for worship or failed to give an offering. I like to see churches worry about finances. It diverts their concern from ministry and missions. (These are dangerous to my cause too). I am writing you this personal letter to beg you to stay away from Sunday School and worship. You know it's easier and more comfortable to stay at home. Besides when you fail to support the church it makes my work so much easier. I look forward to working with you again this week.

As ever,  
Lucifer"

(copied)

## **PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE**

On February 11, 1982 the Church Week printed this report: "The Pulpit Search Committee reports that they have been busy since Christmas. They have traveled to other churches to hear and



talk with other ministers. They are listening to tapes, making contacts, reading resumes and gathering information on a number of good pastors. We are still searching and ask for your prayers as we seek for the man God can use most effectively here. The February 25th issue announced that the committee would bring their recommendation to the church on March 7.

## **CHURCH CONFERENCE FEBRUARY 21, 1982**

Two major matters were on the conference agenda. First a recommendation that our church provide additional financing in the amount of \$2,600 to the family of missionaries in Brazil, Mr. and Mrs. David Long. The first Sunday in June would be designated as "Ingathering Sunday" to supplement the \$1,000 already set aside for that purpose. The second matter was a recommendation that we begin accumulating funds for the purchase of a van to be used for small church groups transportation. Both matters were endorsed positively by the conference.

## **GREET THE NEW PASTORAL FAMILY THE SHEPHERDS**

On March 4, 1982 the church family was invited to meet and greet the Shepherd family on Sunday, March 7, at 7:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall. The Committee headed by Mr. Rance Henderson scheduled the presentation of Mr. Shepherd as pastor of the First Baptist Church to the membership for a vote on March 14, 1982. The record shows that all present voted unanimously to call Mr. Shepherd as our 21st pastor since our founding in 1879. The time set for his beginning was April 1, 1982.

## **STEWARDSHIP NOTE**

Rev. Mr. Bill Rotan who has served as chief of staff since we have been without a pastor issued the following note to the fellowship: "Our church is on the threshold of a new era. Sunday we voted unanimously to call a new pastor. Along with this call comes the commitment on our part. We commit ourselves to support him and to uphold him in our prayers and on and on could go the list. One important area of commitment should be with our money. In fact we must be seriously committed financially if we are to be strong and remain strong. Our budget calls for \$20,617 per month. Beginning on April 1 our monthly budget will be \$21,425 per month. Let each give his fair "share" (to coin a phrase) or let's go deeper. What does the Lord require of thee!"

## **PASTOR INSTALLATION**

On Sunday April 4, 1982 Christians all over the world celebrated the entry of our Lord into Jerusalem. Our church joined the millions of Christians in that celebration. At the same time we installed Rev. Mr. Bob D. Shepherd as our new pastor. There are several good reasons for holding an installation celebration.

1. It gives the calling church and the new pastor a chance publicly to affirm God's leading in the calling process.
2. It firms up personal commitments by the pastor and the search committee.
3. It gives the church and the pastor a sense of starting a new ministry together.
4. It calls on the pastor and the church to be in prayer for one another.

## **DO YOU REMEMBER?**

In a small paragraph in the May 27, 1982 Church Week we were reminded: "W. T. Berry, long time life Deacon loved his church. He made the first gift to the Building Fund on March 29, 1953 in the amount of \$100. He asked for the privilege of making the last gift, which request was, of course, granted. He did make the last gift during the organized giving program. On December 20, 1971 he gave gift number 26,000 in the amount of \$525.31. He was just as excited with gift number 26,000 as he was with gift number 1.

## **FOREIGN MISSIONS SUNDAY**

**JUNE 6, 1982**

On June 6, 1982 which was designated as Foreign Mission Sunday, the family remembered February of 1982 when the congregation approved three recommendations of the Missions Committee:

1. We should contribute to the support of a missionary family on the basis of \$2,600 per year, which amount is 50% of the \$5,200 designated for support of such a family. At that time an annual amount was included in the budget. So, this meant that an additional \$1,600 would have to be appropriated.
  2. The family to which this stipend would be provided would be Mr. and Mrs. David Long, a Burke County couple, who were serving in Brazil.
  3. The first Sunday in June should be designated as Foreign Mission Sunday.
- Therefore, the fellowship fulfilled the resolutions made in February.

## **A WORD FROM PASTOR**

**BOB D. SHEPHERD**

On June 3, 1982 Pastor Shepherd addressed a note to the church which read, in part, "This past Sunday the Ephphtha Class honored Sally Dixon and Lottie Beasley. These two wonderful workers are interpreters for the deaf. In addition they are special friends of the deaf. It was a beautiful and well planned occasion for two deserving people.

Being a participant on the program and fellowshiping with 50-60 of our deaf, I have become more convinced that we have the finest deaf members of any church in the state."

## **DO YOU REMEMBER?**

In a feature introduced by editor Fred Schuszler, the Church Week began calling attention to items of historical interest in our past. This piece appeared in June of 1982: "Mrs. Minnie Huffman Reddish, wife of the pastor of our church and organist when the century turned, was born in 1878 a year before our church was founded. She died at the age of 100, one year before our centennial celebration.

Our beautiful sanctuary organ was donated by her estate and it was her will that we have her residence just across the street from our church."

## **THINK ON THESE THINGS**

**BY PASTOR SHEPHERD**

On June 10, 1982 Pastor Shepherd wrote to the church family on the subject of tithing. "When a person decides to tithe, he will begin a new relationship with God and with the church. There is never an easy time to tithe. Times are hard for many. However, there is never a good time not to tithe. The tithe means that you have set a priority in life. Material things become proportionately valuable. Some things will decrease in value but things of eternal values will increase. Consequently, out of a new order of finances comes the joy, the adventure, the refreshing experience of knowing that you are a creative partner with God and His church.

## **BIBLE SCHOOL FOR ADULTS**

On July 1, 1982 Pastor Shepherd announced an interesting innovation in Fred Schuszler's educational program -- a Vacation Bible School for adults. The first one would be taught by Pastor Shepherd. The first series of concise lessons would deal with Biblical prophecy: 1) What is a prophet? 2) Variations in Biblical prophecy. 3) Jesus prophet of the Kingdom. 4) Prophets in the church. 5) Discerning false prophets.

During the week of July 12-16 the class would meet from noon until 12:50 pm. This would allow time for a snack, a study session and return to routine responsibilities by one o'clock p.m.

The teacher asked prospective pupils to bring to class: 1) a bible, 2) a snack 3) a friend, family

member or a fellow worker, etc. The week was well directed and received. Whereas Pastor Bob expected a total of 30-40 persons to attend, an amazing total of 85 persons including visitors were there. An enthusiastic hope for more studies in the future was voiced.

## **DO YOU REMEMBER?**

Dr. A. M. Lang, son of missionary parents has spent several of his vacation times in Africa in service as a medical missionary.

Women in deacon service began in 1975 in our church when Grace Liebhart was elected. In 1976 Mrs. Elizabeth Walker was elected, followed by Ruth Hogshead, Blanche Byrd, Myrtie Clarke and Jody Hill.

## **A SUMMER PARABLE**

Our Editor is prone to insert a moral into his news weekly news mongering pursuits. Thus a story of a thoughtful family is used to remind us of our own obligations: This pretty little piece in support of stewardship was reprinted in the Church Week July 29, 1982.

"Now it came to pass that vacation time drew near, a certain man, a member of a church bethought him of cool streams where fish were abundant, and his children thought of sandy beaches by the sea, and his wife thought of the mountains. And the church member lifted up his eyes unto the hills and spoke, saying 'Lo the hot days come and even now are at hand. My work lieth heavy upon me. Come let us depart and go to the north country, where fishes do bite and cool winds bring refreshment and pleasant scenes await.'

'Thou speakest wisely' said his wife. 'Yet, three things, even four things must be done ere we go.' 'Three things I can think of but not a fourth said her husband -- that we ask our neighbors to minister to our flowers, our lawn to be mowed and watered and also our mail to be forwarded but no other thing cometh to mind.'

'The fourth is like unto the other three, but greater than all. Thou dig into thy purse and pay the church pledge in order that the Lord's work not be hindered. For verily I say unto thee, thou has more money now than thou shalt have when you wilt return.' The husband replied, 'verily, thou art noble and wise among women,' and he did pay his pledge for the summer and seemed to enjoy vacation all the more."

## **DO YOU REMEMBER?**

On one summer Sunday morning in the 1920's Mrs. F. A. Bower, wife of the pastor was singing a solo "His Eye Is On The Sparrow" in the morning worship service. Almost on cue a sparrow flew into the sanctuary. It flew around for a while and then lit upon one of the pipes of the organ. It sat there as though it could understand and then flew out when Mrs. Bower finished her solo.

## **LINDA HARRIS NEW MUSIC STAFFER**

Miss Linda Harris of Nashville, Tennessee was called on Sunday August 1, 1982 as Church Organist and Music Assistant as announced by Mr. Bill Rotan, Minister of Music. She is at present serving in the First Baptist Church of Laurel, Mississippi as Church Organist. She has a Bachelor of Music degree, (Church Music Major) from Belmont College, Nashville, Tennessee and a Master of Church Music degree from Southern Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky.

## **THE SHEPHERDS ARE MORGANTONIANS**

In his word from the pastor in Church News of August 19, 1982 Pastor Shepherd had this to say: "By the time you read this article the Shepherds will be residents of Morganton, 509 Collett Street. The long awaited move from Shelby should be completed on August 19. Thus, The Tale of Two Cities ends.



Last Saturday a caravan of four pickup trucks moved the "heavy stuff". Drivers were Larry Mull, Norman Burgess, Ransom Whisnant and Jerry Mull. Their assistants were B. B. Mull, Donnie Guffey, Earl Payne and Dub Hord. It was a notable crew. They saved the church a considerable amount of money in moving expense. Thanks!!

Many others have helped and have offered assistance during these days. You are all deeply appreciated. Moving is hard work and I'm not afraid of it -- I'm just sore!

Now, with more meaning than I usually say -- I hope to see you Sunday."

## **TIMELY NOTE FROM MUSIC MINISTER**

### **Tradition and Innovation**

What do you do when you encounter an unfamiliar hymn? shut your book? -your mouth? your heart? and grumble? Or, do you look forward eagerly and thankfully for opportunity to sing a new song?

From time to time in our worship, either by design or by accident, a hymn unfamiliar to some is chosen to meet a particular need in the service.

What a heart warming experience it is to see that most people in the congregation react most favorably to a new song and do their best to sing it. Before the final stanza is sung nearly everyone has gained enough confidence to sing the tune with a degree of security and satisfaction.

Although we all enjoy the familiar, deep down inside none of us really benefits from always doing the same old thing, using the same old stuff. Occasionally in order to keep our worship fresh and vital we must venture into the new and unfamiliar. A healthy balance of old and new, of tradition and innovation is our desire and goal in public worship. We are grateful for the open attitudes of so many at First Baptist Church in this vital matter. All choirs are open to new members this month. Check your schedule and sign up early.

Signed,  
Bill Rotan

## **NEW CLASSES IN SUNDAY SCHOOL**

On September 30, 1982 Fred Schuszler, our very busy Minister of Education announced the formation of five new Sunday School Classes:

Young Marrieds Class, Teachers Nancy Rotan and Larry McMahon. Bible study aimed at needs and interests of young married couples, using Life and Work curriculum.

Bible Book Study, Different books of the Bible will be used, following the Bible Book Curriculum. Several different persons will be leaders. Fred Schuszler will begin the series with II Corinthians and Philemon.

Median Couples Class, Rance Henderson teacher, with Dolores Shepherd as alternate. This is a class for Median age married adults who choose to attend the same class. The curriculum will be Life and Work series.

Thematic Bible Study, Rev. Bill Hall teacher. This class approaches Bible Study by exploring different themes, doctrines, topics, etc. For example the first unit of study will be the Teachings of Jesus.

Sunday School for Special Young Adults, Jean Hern teacher. The hope is that a whole new aspect of ministry will be opened for retarded young adults.

## **DO YOU REMEMBER?**

On Sunday, December 17, 1939, the bulletin had a note of welcome to new members including Mr. and Mrs. Clayton Braswell; Mr. Braswell is our present Chairman of Deacons. Then, on February 25, 1940 a welcome was extended to Mr. and Mrs. Tom Shirley.

## PASTOR THANKS THE COBB FOUNDATION

On December 3, 1982 Rev. Bob Shepherd expressed his thanks and the thanks of the church family for the inclusion of the First Baptist Church among the list of institutions to share in the annual distribution of funds by the Foundation. Mr. Shepherd remarked: "The Beatrice Cobb Trust, a Testamentary Perpetual Trust has allocated \$19,528.34 to the First Baptist Church. This amount is not received as budget income but will be used in special church projects. To enhance our growing church programs we need a van, an audio-video recorder, kitchen items, etc. Later we will decide where this generous contribution is to be used.

Personally and on behalf of our church I wish to pay tribute to Miss Cobb's foresight and generosity. Although dead, she lives in the program of many church and civic causes and educational endeavors. Her work and memory of her fellowman shall never die.

Appreciation is expressed for the Trustees of the Beatrice Cobb Trust. Their dedication and wisdom would be commended by Beatrice Cobb. In her behalf, thank you."

Bob D. Shepherd

## NECROLOGY 1982

During the year 1982 eleven members of our fellowship passed away:

Mrs. Burtis Connelly	Mr. Maston Parham
Mr. Virgil Fox	Mrs. Forrest Smith
Mr. J. F. Byrd	Mrs. Margaret Cook
Mr. R. H. Carter	Mrs. Dora Pearson
Mr. Carl Cox	Mrs. Verdie Wall
Mrs. Ruby Talbert	

## A 1983 RESOLUTION

Pastor Bob Shepherd demonstrated early on that he possesses a great talent to persuade the laziest among us to awaken and do our share in the corporate responsibility in Kingdom matters. This January 6, 1983 letter is a fine case in point: "Somewhere along the way I heard a statement which stayed with me even though I am unable to say when and where I heard it. I hope the words stay with you during the coming months. There are three groups in every church: those who make things happen, those who watch things happen and those who wonder what is happening.

In 1983 we need those who make things happen. I thank God for those of you who have been busy in the Church. However, when I catch a glimpse of our great potential, I quickly conclude that we must involve more good people to make things happen. I consider it my responsibility to challenge members who are in watching and wondering groups to move up to the action group. To this end I resolve to do my best in 1983. See you on Sunday!!"

## BAPTISMS

The great number of persons as candidates for baptism may not have been a record but it was a beautiful evidence of young people responding to the Savior's call. With a very small number of adults the following is the list of people who were announced as candidates on February 24, 1983.

Kerrie Bell	Greg Lowery	Dee Wortman
Beth Choate	Kitty Lowery	John Woodell
Chris Ervin	Kelli McCurry	
Lee Galloway	Jerry Mitchell	
Richard Harris	Shelly Mull	
James Kilpatrick	Nathan Powers	
Thelma Kilpatrick	Wes Powers	
Cookie LeTourneau	David Shirley	

## **PASTOR SHEPHERD CHAMPION OF YOUTH**

From the very outset of his tenure as our pastor, Mr. Bob Shepherd has been pro youth. This is quite evident in the note he wrote on March 10, 1983 in his announcement of the upcoming Youth Day:

"Sunday, March 10, 1983 is youth day at First Baptist Church. Young people will participate in the morning service and will present a program on Wednesday evening March 16. We have some wonderful teenagers in our church. I have confidence in them and thank God for them.

I believe in teenagers because:

- 1) Immaturity and growth blend together with time; I must not forget that the mighty oak was once a nut and so was I. Patience is a necessary virtue in growth.
- 2) Teenagers make mistakes just as their parents did. By God's grace we survived; so will they.
- 3) They are a good investment. I can not give them much which must be bought. I can give them love, understanding and concern.
- 4) Our Lord loved young people. Of course He loved all but in His earthly ministry he showed a special appreciation for those who were growing.
- 5) I believe in teenagers because I have not forgotten that there were those who believed in me."

Bob Shepherd

## **GIFTS TO THE MUSIC DEPARTMENT**

On April 7, 1983 this note from the Minister of Music was in the Church Week. "The Music Ministry has received two very fine and wonderful gifts for the ongoing of the music program.

The fourth octave of hand bells has been received after almost two years of waiting. We are thankful for these bells which were made possible by Mrs. Myrtie B. Clarke in honor of her children, Robert B. Clarke and Philecta C. Staton.

The Grand Piano in the rehearsal hall was given by Mr. G. T. Cornwell when the church moved to the new location in 1967. Mr. Cornwell has made it possible to have the piano reconditioned. We are grateful for the generous gift. Our members are encouraged to visit the music suite to see all of the improvements that have taken place."

## **TEN STEPS TO A MEANINGFUL CHURCH EXPERIENCE**

Pastor Bob Shepherd is a fine teacher. His weekly contributions to the Church Week are worthy of study. On January 20, 1983 he described ten steps to a meaningful church experience:

- (1) Worship regularly with the congregation. Church worship services provide spiritual food to strengthen your Christian life.
- (2) Study to learn the basic beliefs and doctrines of your church and denomination.
- (3) Pray. Much of the strength of the early church was a direct result of their endless prayers.
- (4) Fellowship with fellow churchmen and women; break bread from house to house; develop ties that bind hearts in Christian love.
- (5) Become involved; you are not to be served; you are to serve.
- (6) Witness; the truth is that you are already a witness; your task is to make sure that you are a constructive witness for the Lord and your church.
- (7) Be friendly. Why not mold the reputation that your church is one of the friendliest in town.
- (8) Be happy; it is possible that sour faces on good Christians do as much harm as an outside force of evil.



- (9) Be expectant; attempt great things and expect marvelous results.
- (10) Support your church with tangible gifts. Where your treasure is there will be your heart also.

## **RIDGECREST COTTAGE POLICY REVISED**

Under the leadership of Chairman Charles Monroe the Ridgecrest Cottage Committee issued a set of regulations in January 1983 to control the use of the cottage. The policy statement read as follows: The Ridgecrest Cottage Committee feels that the purpose of our cottage is to provide lodging for church members who are attending regular Ridgecrest conferences for Christian enrichment and training. Such use must take precedence over family vacation or personal use.

Use of the cottage will be handled through reservations which must be made by February 15 for use from May through August, by application to the church office. Reservations for outside groups will be made after this date. Church organizations will be given first choice followed by church members. The Minister of Education will arrange the desired conference meetings.

Members of the First Baptist Church are permitted to use the cottage for attending church related conferences at no charge. Selected outside parties will then be allowed to use the cottage for the following rates:

- 1) \$5 per person per night with a maximum of \$300 per week.
- 2) \$15 per person for a weekend, one to three days with a maximum of \$150.

(Maximum number the cottage will hold is 22 people; please do not use couch in living room for sleeping.)

Church members may use the cottage for personal use for \$10 per night unless the cottage is reserved for church related use. If members are using the cottage and are joined by non-members, the non-members will pay outside party rates of \$5 per person per night, not to exceed \$30 per person per week. House key will be mailed to you upon receipt of rental fee.

Charles Monroe, chmn.

Cottage Committee

January 1983

## **SIGNS OF CHURCH GROWTH**

Pastor Shepherd set forth ten sure signs of church growth in a note to the church dated February 17, 1983. "Sure I like setting new attendance records, new budget records, etc. However, my first love is for those signs for growth which often go unnoticed and seldom make the news.

"A church is growing when:

- 1) There is keen interest in bible study.
- 2) Countless volunteers give numerous hours in maintenance service, work and personal visitation.
- 3) Members say I'm praying for our church.
- 4) More than 100 attend church on a snowy Sunday.
- 5) Inactive members demonstrate a new interest.
- 6) The day after uniting with our church a new member gives the name of a prospect.
- 7) Choir and congregational singing takes on exciting enthusiasm.
- 8) The staff gets elated by hard work.
- 9) Many visitors appear at every service.
- 10) Conversions are frequent.

On a scale of 1 to 10, our church rates a ten plus."

## **A DEPARTURE FROM OLD CUSTOM**

In church conference in February 1983 a new flower policy was presented by the Flower Committee. The committee voted to use "silk flowers" in lieu of natural material. It was agreed that natural flowers or dried arrangements were preferred when available. Because of the size and lighting in the Sanctuary it was agreed that guide lines for acceptability of silk flowers as follows:

- 1) The committee and one other person to be chosen by the committee shall pass on the acceptability of materials offered.
- 2) No arrangement will be accepted unless it is understood that it may be taken apart or used separately or in combination with other material after initial use.
- 3) Silk flowers not arranged will be accepted and acknowledged in the bulletin and news letter.

The flower committee and the church are grateful to those members who have as personal or family tradition put flowers in the church on or near the anniversary or birthday of an honoree.

## **APRIL REVIVALS 1983**

The deaf congregation were inspired by the April 22-24 revival under the theme "Hearing God Speak". The speaker was Rev. Mr. Clifford Bruffey, who was missionary to the deaf in the Washington, D. C. area.

Dr. Jim Griffith, who served as Executive Director of the Georgia Baptist State Convention, was preacher for the Church Wide Revival April 24-27. Dr. Griffith was a Morganton resident some years ago when he was associated with the News Herald.

## **CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS CHANGES**

Article IV of the constitution has to do with the election of deacons. The Constitution Committee proposed an amendment to that article as outlined, Church Week April 28, 1983.

**Section 1.** Every member of the Church has the privilege of nominating by ballot, ten members to serve as deacons.

**Section 2.** The nominating ballot does not have to be signed.

**Section 3.** The nominating ballots are to be distributed and nominations are to be made on a designated Sunday morning service during the worship hour.

**Section 4.** Absentee voting: if a member knows in advance he or she will not be present on the morning when nominations will be made, he or she may present his ballot to the church office by noon on nominating Sunday.

**Section 5.** The ballots shall be counted by a committee made up of retiring deacons.

**Section 6.** The tabulating committee will count ballots to determine the 10 men and/or women receiving the highest number of votes. In case of a tie for tenth nominee to be presented to the church, the name of one of the nominees involved in the tie shall be chosen by lot.

**Section 7.** The ten nominees receiving the largest number of votes shall meet with the Pastor, the chairman of Deacons and the vice chairman. At that meeting the requirements and expectations pertaining to deacon service will be discussed. At the conclusion of the meeting nominees agreeing to serve three years will sign a commitment of intent to serve.

**Section 8.** If one or more of the nominees should choose not to serve, the next highest nominee (or nominees) will engage in the above process.

**Section 9.** On a designated Sunday the ten nominees will be presented to the Church for affirmation.

**Section 10.** Nominees for unexpired terms shall be nominated by the same procedure as the regular ten nominees.

The changes were duly approved by the Church in conference.

## **PASTOR STRESSES DIGNITY IN WORSHIP**

Pastor Bob Shepherd often stresses the utmost dignity on the part of all worshipers. He considers it his duty to lead the congregation in a meaningful experience. On April 14, 1983, in a note on the subject he touched upon these elements of a worshipful conduct.

A congenial atmosphere enhances worship. A warm welcome to visitors is important. While worshipers must refrain from interpersonal communications, they must dare to communicate with God. While children are always welcome in the "big church", parents should discourage their leaving the sanctuary. Worship is personal and corporate. We must never interrupt the thoughts of others as we experience God's presence. Always remember that worship is exposure to ultimate destiny - ultimate light - ultimate mercy. It requires our best in all things.

## **YOUTH MISSION TRIP**

On August 4, 1983, the following note appeared in Church Week in evidence of a growing youth mission emphasis:

Pray for the youth mission trip. Friday, August 5, to Saturday, August 13, under the direction of Fred Schuszler, fourteen young people journeyed to West Monmouth Baptist Church of Freehold, N.J. to serve as leaders in the Vacation Bible School of that church. The following young missionaries made the trip:

Dianne Gregory	Mark Hardin
Barb Bailey	Terri Hardin
Marc Lowdermilk	LeDonna Hemphill
Djuna Hemphill	Hunter Middleton
Christie Baker	Aaron Rotan
Randall Gaylon	John Rotan
Noel Shepherd	

Upon return of the missionaries, Fred Schuszler made a report in Church Week, August 25, in part, in these words: "Before leaving on our youth mission trip to New Jersey, we asked for your prayers. If your prayers were for a successful, safe, happy meaningful trip, then they were answered. The young missionaries went to do a job - to lead the Vacation Bible School of West Monmouth Baptist Church and they did it well. It was work, hard work. It was a long trip. We had some trouble but attitudes remained good and patience prevailed even in New York City traffic. You can be proud of the entire mission team."

## **TOGETHER IN SEPTEMBER 1983**

Again the Together in September was scheduled with our church as the first site of the gathering. For some reason only the meeting in our church was recorded in Church Week. This service concluded a series of good inter-faith services that lasted for five years.

The Church Week report read: "This Sunday evening September 11 members of the First Baptist Church, First United Methodist Church and First Presbyterian Church will join in a service of worship and fellowship together. The service was at 7:30 pm and the choir for the service was the Chancel Choir of First Baptist Church.

The guest preacher for this traditional service was Dr. H. Louis Patrick, pastor of Trinity Presbyterian Church of Charlotte. Dr. Patrick has frequently been the preacher in the Protestant Hour.

Following the worship there was a period of fellowship in the Fellowship Hall."

## **WORLD'S GREATEST EVENT**

Pastor Shepherd dealing in a beautiful truth made some heart warming comparisons as the



Christmas season '83 drew near. These timely thoughts were imparted to us in a note in Mid-December 1983. These were his words on the subject: "The great events of this world are not political, are not earthquakes or storms or even the great medical discoveries. The earth's greatest event is the birth of a child. There were Moses, Samuel, Christ and you -- Great Events! With each birth comes the message that God is not discouraged with men. Instead, God is expecting goodness and love to become incarnate in each human life. The earth's greatest event was the birth of a baby in Bethlehem. God became one of us that we may become one of His. In Christ there is new life. In the world there is new life which came to be when Christ was born. There is birth and new birth. God's Child is born."

## **NECROLOGY 1983**

During 1983 a total of six persons of our fellowship died.

Mrs. Vera Estes

Mr. A. E. Dees

Mr. McDowell Estes

Mrs. Mary Bush

Mrs. W. M. Senter

Mrs. E. M. Hairfield, Jr.

## **BENFIELDS STILL ACTIVE**

On January 1984 we read of a new assignment of Mr. Benfield. He was appointed interim pastor at Rutherford College First Baptist Church. Pastor Bob Shepherd commented: "We always miss these choice servants when they are away from us but we willingly share them with other congregations."

## **PASTOR SHEPHERD, A LOOK AHEAD**

On February 9, 1984 our pastor reminded us that when he arrived on April Fools day in 1982, he presented a 5 year plan for church growth. We have completed his plan in two years. He then outlined a plan for 1984-86. The following are excerpts of the second plan. 1) Concentrated bible study. 2) Strengthen church training. 3) Continue annual appreciation day. 4) Remodel or rebuild the kitchen and expand the Fellowship Hall. 5) Make a decision pertaining to the Chapel. 6) Increase giving, especially to home missions. 7) Employ summer youth workers. 8) Consider a joint venture with the state convention for obtaining a minister for the deaf. 9) Promote wills, trusts, etc. to enhance future church programs. 10) Purchase a bus.

## **TIME TO REPLACE OUR BUS**

On June 7, 1984 the Bus Committee called attention to a need for action to replace our ancient coach in these words: "In 1983 a bus fund was begun with the idea that such a fund and the sale of our present bus would enable us to buy a better used bus. In February church conference the church approved as one of our goals the purchase of a better bus. Since the old bus was over thirty years old the committee believes we should begin making our dream a reality. On Saturday June 16 an example of a new coach will be parked on the church lot in order that any one interested in a newer bus may inspect it. We are under no obligation to Trailways under this arrangement. This is only an attempt to let our people know what is offered and then to be a part of the selection process. So, come by the bus parking area on June 16, between the hours of 10:00 and 2:00 and see what you think of the bus being considered."

## **PASTOR BOB'S NOTE ON THE BUS**

On July 26, 1984 "The Bus is here! Look who's on it!! Sunday School classes, youth groups, the deaf department, concerned individuals have climbed aboard the 'bus drive'. The 1973 Trailways bus has every thing you have wanted on a bus. The 46 passenger diesel was purchased

for \$47,000. The old bus was sold for \$13,500. We received contributions totaling \$17,700 and we borrowed \$15,800. I believe we can pay off the loan within a few months. Why not join the drive? The bus will be used for conferences, retreats, christian recreation and fellowship and for mission trips, etc."

## **CHURCH CONFERENCE OCTOBER 10, 1984**

At the October 10, 1984 conference the first record of the beginning of a plan for expansion of the Fellowship Hall and a kitchen facility was made in these words: "Sam Freeman, Building Committee Chairman asked for approval of expending \$4,000 to retain Robert Salsbury Associates to do a preliminary study for expansion of the Fellowship Hall and the building of a new kitchen. The request was granted. The church will be updated monthly and no construction shall begin until plans are complete and approved by the church family."

## **BUS DEBT SHRINKING**

A gift of \$1,125 to the Bus Fund has reduced the debt to \$4,900.

## **CHURCH CONFERENCE DECEMBER 29, 1984**

The Building Committee requested that a Building Fund be set up with \$7,100 on hand to provide "seed money" for programs as they are approved. Also the following appointments be approved:

- 1) Clayton Braswell as Chairman of Canvass and Solicitation Committee.
- 2) Jerry Harmon, Asst. Secretary and Treasurer of the Building Committee.

All of the foregoing recommendations were approved.

In keeping with the missionary ideals of our church, Pastor Bob Shepherd recommended that we appropriate 10% of future Building Fund donations and that such money would be given to mission causes, over and above our regular budget, through the Cooperative Program. This was also approved.

Specific recommendations pertaining to the Fellowship Hall expansion and the new kitchen will be presented in January 1985.

## **NECROLOGY 1984**

During the year 1984, these members passed away:

Miss Fannie Huffman	Miss Lois Cantrell
Mr. G. B. Duval	Mr. Y. E. Spake
Mr. Leith Rudicil	Mr. B. B. Mull
Mrs. T. B. Powell	Mr. Jerry Liebhart
Mr. James Taylor	Mr. Carol Mull
Mrs. Ruth Hudson	Mr. Jim Lingerfelt
Mr. Sammy Williams	Mrs. Belle McIntosh

## **FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH TELECASTS**

On January 17, 1985 Pastor Bob Shepherd announced that on January 20, at 11:05 AM Channel 29 (tape delay) "will televise our Sunday A.M. services of worship. We are indebted to Burke Cable Co., Ltd. and Mr. Andy Kohle for their direction and assistance. Burke Cable has made available to us an open channel."

## **BUILDING COMMITTEE UPDATE**

On February 14, 1985 the Committee felt that it would be well to repeat the Committee's

role in the program to expand the church physical plant, in these words: "During last August our committee was asked to explore ways and means to realize some of the goals set forth by our people in an earlier expansion survey. Many concerns were expressed and prominent among them were: Enlargement of the Fellowship Hall, improvement of the kitchen and the building of a chapel. With these expressions as guidelines we set to work. Our committee, comprising Baptists of long standing, were fully aware of our mission and the democratic make up of a Baptist congregation such as our own. We knew that we had no budget and no authority to commit the church family to any program without advice and consent of the deacons and finally that of the church family in conference. We have observed this important principle faithfully and shall continue to do so. Thus, the first phase of the program has advanced to an important point. We are under contract to receive working plans and to solicit proposals for construction and equipment for the kitchen and Fellowship Hall alterations program. We shall have further recommendation regarding alteration of the stage within a short while and if approved by all concerned we hope to make such stage alterations a part of phase one when bids are received and tabulated and reviewed with the church family in conference. If the family says "go" we will make contracts at once; if the family says "no" we will be guided by such decision."

It is appropriate here to repeat the role of the Building Committee and to list names of Building Committee members and the three sub-committees.

- 1) We are fully aware that we are only a research, and exploratory advisory group.
- 2) We are not empowered nor do we wish to obligate the church in absence of explicit instructions by the church in duly convened church conference.
- 3) We are happy to say that in addition to many veteran Baptists and young Baptists we number among our associates three ordained ministers who, we believe, concur in our functions and purposes.
- 4) Finally, we earnestly solicit the prayers, the understanding and good will of our church family as we continue to do God's will in this experience of growing together.

#### **BUILDING COMMITTEE**

Sam W. Freeman, chmn.  
John Alexander  
Evelyn Berry  
Clayton Braswell  
Norman England  
Dr. Ralph Falls  
Jerry Harmon  
Ruth Hogshead  
Tony Long  
Max Lowery  
Boots Tolbert

#### **EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS**

Bob D. Shepherd, Pastor  
Bill Rotan, Min. of Music  
Fred Schuszler, Min. Educ.  
Jerry Mull  
Rene McMahon  
Mrs. R. O Huffman  
Bob Henderson

#### **CANVASS COMMITTEE**

Ruth Hogshead, chmn.  
Ben Hoffmeyer  
Tom Shirley  
Walter Bell  
Georgeanne Crowe  
Larry McMahon  
Walt Setzer  
Bill McNeely  
Frances Abernathy  
Paul Hudson

#### **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Clayton Braswell, chmn.  
Jody Hill  
Jerry Harmon  
Dr. Ralph Falls  
Ruth Hogshead  
Tony Long  
Max Lowery

#### **BANQUET COMMITTEE**

Jody Hill, chmn.  
Alice Deaton  
Betty Day  
Al Dickens  
Ron Black  
Jo Ann Smith  
Jean Stephens  
Dr. A. M. Lang  
Earl Payne  
Jim Richardson  
Rene McMahon



## **CARING AND SHARING**

### **FEBRUARY 25, 1985**

Our members were pleased to learn how the North Anderson, SC church had expressed their love for Lamar and Linda Campbell who moved from their church to ours as set forth in this item in the Church Week: "North Anderson Baptist Church, Anderson, SC has presented Lamar and Linda Campbell with a 1971 Chevrolet Van to aid the Campbells with their work with the Laotian refugee children. The Campbells returned to their home church for the presentation by Pastor Jerry Moore. The van was loaded with clothing for the Hmongs and a love gift was presented to the Campbells."

## **YOUTH SUNDAY 1985**

In March 1985, Youth Sunday was led by an outstanding list of young people as written up in March 14 Church Week:

Angela Caroway	Eddie McNeely	Jim Bridges	Noel Shepherd
Kristin McCurry	Tricia Beasley	Bev Fletcher	Dee Crowe
Randall Galyon	Ronna Wood	Matt Lowdermilk	Terri Hardin
Aaron Rotan	Webb Farrar	Christie Baker	Rae Beasley
John Rotan	Mark Lambert		

The writer of this item added: "Youth Emeritus Bob Shepherd will give the message."

## **FAITH VENTURE UPDATE**

### **1985**

Pastor Bob Shepherd reviewed the Faith Venture program in his letter on March 25, 1985: "My dear First Baptist Family:

I thank God for you and for the privilege of being your pastor during these exciting days. The lost are being saved, individuals are growing in spirit and our fellowship is increasing. New buildings will enable us to serve many more. We are a community church with a world of concern.

I enthusiastically encourage every member of our church to help in our faith venture: not equal dollars, but equal dedication; not equal gifts of time but equal sacrifice. Let everybody participate - not one left out. Let us rise up and build! All of us! Let us keep the vision and faith of our fathers. Let us anchor the future in faith for our children and our community. Our Faith Venture goal is to raise \$1,000,000 within the next six years. The church will decide the priorities of the projects and when to begin each project. With God's help and your support our six year plan includes: Installation of carillon bells (church approved and funds in hand) a new kitchen (church approved, funds to be raised) Build Chapel; (not yet approved but \$180,000 in hand.) Build 4 pre-school rooms (not yet approved) funds to be raised; two new education offices; storage space and conference room: (not yet approved and funds to be raised) covered drive entrance on west side of sanctuary; (not yet approved and funds to be raised) painting of present facilities; (not yet approved and funds to be raised.) Our victory goal \$700,000; our challenge goal \$900,000; our praise goal \$1,000,000.

The future of our church waits on our commitment in Faith Venture. Would you join me in saying 'if it's to be it's up to me!'"

Expectantly,  
Bob Shepherd,  
Senior Minister

## **A TRIBUTE TO THE ROTANS**

### **MARCH 21, 1985**

We were reminded of an important anniversary to the Rotans and the Church family in a note from Pastor Shepherd:

This month Bill Rotan will have completed his fifth year as Associate Minister since com-

ing to Morganton. Bill and his family have blessed the lives of countless people. His accomplishments are too numerous to mention. Bill's dual role as Music Minister and church administrator are demanding. He is always more than equal to the challenge.

Nancy, John, Aaron and David are all very capable church workers. We are very fortunate to have this beautiful family as partners in work.

We love you, Rotans! We thank God for five years of unselfish service and we pray for many more years of labor together.

Bob Shepherd

## **MEDIA LIBRARY**

**APRIL 11, 1985**

The following announcement was printed in the Church Week on April 11, 1985. "We have a wonderful media library in our church, providing a variety of media as teaching aids for pleasure and self enrichment. There are over 2000 books for adults and children in every classification from Biblical references to fiction, sound film strips, disc and tape recordings, maps, pamphlets, periodicals and audio-visual equipment are available for your use. Drop in for a visit! Our excellent library staff will be glad to help you.

## **FAITH VENTURE BANQUET**

**APRIL 1985**

The banquet was put on as a promotion of the idea of our togetherness in faith that we could make our building plans materialize. There were 140 pledges made for \$198,000. It was announced that the Canvass Committee would soon make an every member canvass to enlist all of the church family in the program.

Three important dates in April and May were announced:

- 1) April 22, 1985 in Adult Assembly IV a discussion of bids for kitchen and fellowship hall expansion.
- 2) April 24, 1985 meet in fellowship hall to consider proposals and for an on site discussion of plans.
- 3) May 5, 1985 a church conference to review final proposals prior to bid acceptance, and to consider borrowing of funds to support the expansion of fellowship hall and construction and equipping of a new kitchen.

## **SPRING REVIVAL**

**SPRING 1985**

Dr. Frank Campbell, Pastor of First Baptist Church in Statesville served as revival preacher in the Spring Revival meeting of 1985. During the week he delivered five inspiring messages.

## **MOTION TO BUILD**

**AND AWARD OF JOB**

On May 5, 1985 the church in conference voted unanimously to build the fellowship hall and kitchen project. The contract for the work of construction only was awarded to the low bidder, Beam Construction Co., of Morganton, NC. The contract sum was \$335,187.

## **A BUSY EDUCATION MINISTER**

**MAY 16, 1985**

Fred Schuszler wrote enthusiastically of the fine study opportunities open to all members of the fellowship. Subjects made available included Christian Life Study topics: "Christians and the Media", "The Bible Speaks to Personal Crises", "Introduction to Handbells", "You and Your Pre-school Child", "The Bible and Current Issues", "An Introduction to the Bible", "Making Good

Marriages Better", "What Baptists Believe", "C.P.R. Training", "Senior Adult Years", "Getting There, Being There", "Confronting the Cults", "How We Got Our Bible", "Childrens Growth Stages", "Evangelife", "Christian Guide to Financial Planning", "Doctrine of Christ", "Hymns, Gospel Songs and Worship".

We owe a debt of gratitude to the following leaders who have made these studies come to life by their skilled treatments of them. John Carter, Bill Martin, Bob Shepherd, Bill Rotan, Betty Henderson, Chuck Galyon, Art Elmore, Ann Clontz, Ruth Clontz, Liz Moore, Larry McMahon and Murray Small.

The childrens studies were coordinated by Cathy Alexander and a host of others with Debbi Goforth teaching a special course on "Jesus our Lord and Savior". We appreciate all those who make the childrens' studies so meaningful when there was such a wide age span. The Christian Education Committee is busy shaping next fall's Christian Life studies. We want to meet your needs. Let us hear from you. See you in Sunday School.

Fred Schuszler

## **A SPECIAL GIFT**

**JULY 19, 1985**

Mr. and Mrs. Carl Wall have made a generous gift in memory of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Herman Wall. Mr. Herman Wall was a member of the Baraca Class and was a life deacon.

The Wall's gift of \$10,000 will be used for stage renovation, curtains, lighting and sound equipment. Needless to say, this gift will enable us to have excellent facilities for future programs, dramas, etc.

## **PASTOR BOB ON**

**SUMMER JULY 1985**

Let me begin by saying I'm not opposed to summer vacations. All of us need some time for relaxation and recreation. My concern is the casual, almost irreverent attitudes of some Christians toward church attendance and responsibilities during the summer. For some this attitude is prevalent even if there is no vacation out of town.

I want to encourage you to:

- 1) Be committed to responsibilities at church. Make sure that a responsible person serves in your place if you are out of town.
- 2) When out of town on Sunday, make an effort to attend where you are visiting.
- 3) Be faithful in your giving. Your church continues to work when you are absent. During the crucial summer months, faithfully pray for your church and be faithful in attendance when you are in town.

Continue to have a great summer.

Bob Shepherd

## **ROTAN TO CHICAGO**

**OCTOBER 1985**

Bill Rotan was appointed to the Mega Focus mission trip to Chicago which was sponsored by the N. C. Baptist State Convention. Bill made this report to the church: "The Mega Focus Chicago mission trip sponsored by the state convention and the Sunday School Board was a good experience for me. I was assigned to the Glenfield Baptist Church, Glen Ellyn, IL. This southern church of 150 families is 23 years old and is very much involved in mission work. However, the difficulty people have in getting to church (because of time, traffic and distance) makes it hard for the music program to get off of the ground. The leaders appreciated our coming to them. All of us received more than we gave. This was the kickoff of Musicians On Missions for the next five years. Thanks for allowing me the privilege of being on the historic first project.



## **MRS. R. KNOLAN BENFIELD'S DEMISE NOVEMBER 15, 1985**

The fellowship was surprised and shocked by the untimely death of Mrs. Emma Benfield. She had been a strong supporter of all of the ministries of the church and a convention-wide supporter of Woman's Missionary Union activities. She will be greatly missed locally and all across the state and the Southern Baptist Convention.

## **BUILDING COMMITTEE PROGRESS REPORT NOVEMBER 21, 1985**

These facts were chosen from that report:

- 1) We hope to occupy the facilities in December 1985.
- 2) Expenditures through payment of October billings were \$225,500 including the tithe to the N. C. Cooperative Program and the extensive expansion of Sunday school space on the second floor of the Sanctuary Building.
- 3) Loans from Wachovia to date amount to \$107,000. We have met 53% of total cost to date by donations.
- 4) We have an unspent balance to apply to December billings in the amount of \$8,372.86.

## **MUSIC NOTES 1985**

Mr. Bill Rotan reported these significant notes in an August report:

We are pleased to announce that a fifth octave of Whitechapel handbells have been donated by Mrs. Myrtie B. Clarke. These bells are an addition to the first memorial set of bells given in memory of Mr. Ralph Clarke. This gift completes a full handbell set. There are now 61 bells waiting to be played. Truly this is an outstanding memorial gift. The musical expression will always be a reminder of this fine man and his family.

In the same report Mr. Rotan added: A set of 3 octave choir chimes has been given to the music ministry. These handbell chimes are tuned to standard pitch which allows them to accompany voices, duet with handbells or ring alone. They are great for teaching note reading, as well as good, solid basic handbell techniques.

## **BERNARD BANE MULL CARILLON DECEMBER 1985**

In the December 5 issue of Church Week the following description was announced: The word carillon means a set of bells, each producing one tone of the chromatic scale sounded by means of a keyboard or by a clock mechanism. Webster's New 20th century unabridged dictionary indicated that the first syllable is to be stressed. Thus the magnificent new installation soon to be made in our steeple tower may properly be called a CARillon. Larry Mull whose family's loving generosity made possible the wonderful memorial to his father Mr. B. B. Mull, hopes it will be known as the Bernard Bane Mull Memorial Carillon.

The inspiration, the man whose memory will be perpetuated by this generous bequest, was for many years an energetic and devoted supporter of the total ministry of our church. Not only did he attend rehearsals and performances of the choir, he was most generous with his financial support of the total program of our church.

This set of bronze bells, comprising 23 pieces, ranging in weight from 48 pounds to 638 pounds, add up to a total weight of 4313 pounds. When mounted on the extensive steel support platforms in the tower the entire system weighs about 3 tons. The 23 bells provide the musician with a range of 23 notes which comprise two octaves.

It is an interest to note that the family has elected to have cast into the 639 pound #C4 bell the name of Mr. Mull. Into others are cast the names of Mrs. Gladys Brittain Mull, Larry Edwin Mull, Mrs. Lena Burns Mull and the three Mull children Kimberly, Kristen and Bryan. In others

are the names of the members of the several related families: Abshires, Blantons, Hicks, Mull and Phillips.

The fine art of bell casting is not a modern one. Records have been found that the practice dates back to the middle ages in Europe. That era in history, approximately 1000 years, marks the time from the early 400's to the 1400's A.D. The firm which supplied the Mull bells is Paccard Fonderie De Cloches, Arnecy, France. This firm began in the year 1796 when the first casting, a 16,640 pound bell was poured at the close of the French Revolution. Since then seven generations of the family of Antoine Paccard of Arnecy founder of the firm, have made more that 85,000 bells and have sent them all over the globe. Other Paccard installations in our area are at the Chapel of Wake Forest University, Davidson College and Clemson University.

## **NECROLOGY 1985**

During the year 1985 the following members of our fellowship died:

Mr. Joe Griffin	Mr. Dave Rader
Mr. Joe Berry	Mrs. Mattie Beach
Mr. Gary Dale	Mrs. French Fritz
Mrs. Rama Jean Littlejohn	Mrs. Joe Miller
Miss Germaine Queen	Mr. Bobby Erwin
Mr. L. B. Sweezy	Mr. L. A. Hunnicutt
Mr. Charles Moore	Mrs. Emma Benfield

## **JOHN CREWS**

**JANUARY 2, 1986**

This announcement was inserted in the Church Week by Patricia Crawford, Activities Chairwoman of the Deaf Department: "Welcome John Crews. The Deaf Department will host a welcome reception for John Crews, Minister to the Deaf of the First Baptist Church, Saturday, January 4, 1986 at 7:30 pm in the church parlor. Don't forget to bring goodies, etc. Drinks, coffee, utensils will be provided by the church."

Patricia Crawford

## **JOHN CREWS**

**BY PASTOR BOB SHEPHERD**

**JANUARY 9, 1986**

Pastor Shepherd commenting on the arrival of John Crews said in part: "The arrival of John Crews, minister to the deaf, has reminded me of the many projects of our church made possible through the Beatrice Cobb Trust. Because of the generosity and vision of Beatrice Cobb and the excellent management of the Trustees we receive an annual allocation of \$15,000 to \$20,000. We have been able to purchase a computer, typewriters, a copier, some capital improvements, increase local missions projects, etc., during 1986. Six thousand dollars (\$6000) has been allocated to the fund to employ John Crews. The Baptist State Convention has agreed to match this sum."

## **BETTER HOMES CLUB 1986**

The newly established Better Homes Club had its first meeting on February 7, 1986. The speaker was Rev. C. David Matthews, pastor of First Baptist Church, Greenville, SC.

## **CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION**

**OF W. M. U.**

The church family marked the 100th birthday of W. M. U. at family night January 22, 1986 with 345 persons in attendance at the first meeting in our new Fellowship Hall.

## FAITH VENTURE 1

### FINAL SUMMARY

On March 13, 1986 the project summary was published in the Church Week:

A.	Income:	
1.	Contributions through March 4, 1986 .....	\$172,648.56
2.	Interest Income .....	1,709.92
3.	Loans, Wachovia Bank and Trust Co. ....	226,000.00
4.	Funds available for project .....	400,358.48
B.	Expenditures:	
1.	Construction .....	277,524.29
2.	Architecture and inspection fees .....	20,082.26
3.	Donations SBC Cooperative Fund .....	16,315.79
4.	Renovations to second floor Sunday School quarters .....	11,717.92
5.	Furniture, equipment, decorations, drapery, etc. ....	66,627.71
6.	Misc. ....	3,928.12
7.	Total project cost to date .....	\$396,196.09
C.	Future Obligations	
1.	Estimated cost of painting the Kistler House and the original Fellowship Hall .....	\$8,000.00
2.	Balance to complete work in process .....	150.00
3.	Landscaping estimated .....	1,000.00
4.	Foreseeable extra expenditures .....	9,150.00
D.	Fund Condition March 13, 1986	
1.	Savings account State Employees Credit Union .....	\$26.80
2.	Money Market Funds State Employees Credit Union .....	2,890.84
3.	Checking Account State Employees Credit Union .....	244.75
4.	Total funds available .....	\$3,162.39

The obligation to Wachovia in the amount of \$226,000.00 plus accrued interest in the amount of \$5,589.02, total \$231,589.52 is the most important figure in the mass of numbers above. We sincerely hope that every one of our members will have a significant part in helping to dispose of this debt. The prime interest rate has just dropped to 9%. Let's eradicate this debt before it escalates again.

The foregoing summary covers the following work: extension of the Fellowship Hall by about thirty feet to the east; replacing the old roof of the original Fellowship Hall; replacing ceiling tiles and floor tiles of the original hall, removing structure of the second floor of the sanctuary and converting the area into larger classrooms, furnishing and equipping dining room and kitchen of the new portion of the Fellowship Hall; enlarging and equipping of stage with curtains and lighting and sound equipment.

## CARILLON DEDICATION

### JUNE 1, 1986

June 1, 1986 was the day of dedication of the Bernard Bane Mull Carillon. This was one of the highlights of the church year. The celebration included a luncheon and a concert of the bells.

## RECORD SUNDAY SCHOOL

### ENROLLMENT

On May 22, 1986 the enrollment of the Sunday School reached 900 persons. Both Minister of Education Fred Schuszler and Sunday School Director Paul Faulk derive great satisfaction from this all time high enrollment.



## **FORETASTE OF WINDS OF DISSENSION JUNE 1986**

Pastor Bob Shepherd reported to the church following the convention of 1986. His observations were probably the first indication to the membership in general that the SBC had a whirlwind that became a force which at that time seemed to foretell the disaster that would result from the actions of power hungry Baptists who with a vengeful coalition of single minded persons decided to destroy a once peaceful Convention by non-Baptist political maneuvering to oust that large segment of Baptists whom they chose to label as liberals. Thus a huge segment of Southern Baptists were cut apart from the mainstream of Baptists which had functioned peaceably for generations. Mr. Shepherd's letter voiced foresight which seemed to emerge in his vision when he commented: "President Stanley kept the convention moving in an orderly fashion considering that this was a mass convention with explosive issues considered. Some messengers were not filled with the right spirit. Our ten messengers were not delegates; they were not told how to vote; we trusted them to vote as they felt best. Adrian Rogers was elected President as expected. He will follow the pattern of Dr. Stanley.

Key positions were filled by appointment. It was sad to note that 'friends' were appointed who have little or no experience in the life of the convention. It seemed that conservatives did not value experience in the convention or the knowledge of the vast operation of the convention or awareness of the rich heritage.

I was very uncomfortable with the tense atmosphere laden with clouds of distrust and blown by winds of accusations. Priesthood of believers was removed like tumbleweeds in a tornado. A creed is on the horizon. Hero worship is seeping in.

In the future we must move toward a presidency with less authority. We should develop a plan assuring smaller conventions. One or two from regional centers, up to ten messengers could vote on special matters while observing the proceedings on TV hookups. We spend millions of dollars each year on conventions.

Also, conservatives are my brothers and sisters. I wish I could be theirs. I am conservative. But, please, allow me the God given privilege of a definition."

Bob Shepherd

## **NEW CHAPEL PHASE II FAITH VENTURE**

With Phase I of our Faith Venture now complete and occupied (except for paying our indebtedness) the Building Committee turned to emphasis on a New Chapel. Pastor Shepherd expressed his feelings on the matter in this note to the church: "Within the next few months we must consider the feasibility of a Chapel. Money is in hand or pledged. We will not have to 'go in debt'. The Church staff proposes the following:

A Chapel could be used for:

1. Teaching through films and VCR
2. Open daily for prayer and meditation.
3. Small weddings.
4. Small funerals.
5. Special seasonal services, Lent, Thanksgiving, etc.
6. Adult bible study.
7. Recitals, voice, piano, etc.
8. Wednesday evening bible study for adults.
9. Deaf Sunday School.
10. State leadership workshops.
11. W.M.U. week of prayer, mission programs, etc.

As one staff member observed; "our imagination will be the only limit to its use."

## **IMPORTANT MEETING IN FELLOWSHIP HALL**

The church was notified on August 21, 1986 of a special meeting called for August 24, 1986. The Building Committee with the help of Architect Robert Salsbury planned to present printed and pictorial material to describe updated plans for a Chapel. This was in preparation for a church conference on September 10, 1986.

## **CHURCH CONFERENCE SEPTEMBER 10, 1986**

The Church in conference unanimously approved recommendations of the Building Committee that we build a Chapel between the Educational Wing of the Church and the Kistler Home, with Mr. Robert Salsbury as architect and planner.

## **CHILDRENS' CHURCH BEGINS**

On October 2, 1986 Fred Schuszler announced another of his continuing programs to involve the total family in the worship experience of the First Baptist Church. CHILDRENS' CHURCH was a new program designed to make the worship hour more meaningful for four and five year old children. Parents were asked to prepare their children for this new experience. Children will sit with their families until the second hymn, after Fred's childrens' sermon. They will then follow Fred to room 211. They will then engage in interesting educational experiences designed to teach them the meaning of worship.

## **NECROLOGY 1986**

During the year 1986 the following members of our fellowship passed away:

Mrs. Faye Korkoske	Mr. G. L. Darden	Mr. P. W. Wellman
Mr. Johnny Berry	Mr. Willard Wilson	Mr. P. W. Patton, Jr.
Mr. Louis Walker	Mr. Ivey McGimsey	Mr. David Moyes
Mrs. Catherine Fox	Mr. Ronald L. McCurry	Mrs. Mary Goins
Mrs. Louise Cornwell	Mr. Walter Harris	Mr. C. W. Baker

## **CHAPEL PLANS JANUARY 8, 1987**

The Building Committee called a meeting to which all members were invited. The committee planned to discuss the project and accept questions from the membership. This was preliminary to a church conference on February 4 at 6:30 pm. The members will be in a better position at the February 4 conference after attending the January 8 meeting.

## **FAITH VENTURE II THE CHAPEL**

While there was great enthusiasm when the announcement of the beginning of the planning for the Chapel project was made, there was far less need for fund raising as was the case in Faith Venture I. The sale of the Reddish home across the street had provided a substantial building fund. This money along with pledges made by Mrs. R. O. Huffman and Mr. Tom Cornwell made the financial aspect of the project very secure.

The furnishing and equipping and decorating of the Chapel was accomplished by designated gifts of money by a large segment of the fellowship who wished to have a share in the new Chapel program. An important part of this aspect of the project, Faith Venture II, was the donation of funds earmarked for specific purposes.

As this project was started in early 1987 and dedicated about a year later in March 1988, this part of the story will be inserted in the record between the beginning and the final dedication dates. Preliminary planning work involving the entire Building Committee, those appointed and

those who were members by virtue of their position in the Church, began in early January 1987. In some meetings the Architect-Planning personnel were involved.

After the combined Committee made the decision to launch a program, the first job was to select a site for the structure in order to make a complete proposal to the church family in conference. At least five locations were suggested for consideration. The first was an area on the west side of the church which would take up a sizeable part of parking area. The second was on the north side of the Fellowship Hall looking toward the Table Rock mountain range. The third was in the east side parking area. This would spoil the view of the Kistler House as approached from the east. The fourth was near the sanctuary and parallel to the sanctuary with a walkway between the two structures. The fifth was the site upon which the Chapel now stands. Each of the five sites had merit but the site chosen seemed to have more pluses and fewer minuses than any of the others. In addition to its other merits, it afforded a room easily converted to use as a Brides Room in the Kistler house. We believe that from all points of view the site chosen was the best.

The tower to house the bell removed from the old church building, which was cast in 1895, was a gift of Mr. and Mrs. Max Saunders in memory of Mrs. Saunders father, Mr. Sam Fleming and in honor of Mrs. Fleming. Mr. Fleming tolled the bell many times during his long time in service as sexton of the Church.

After a series of preliminary conferences involving many interested persons, the wishes of the church were reduced to a written set of specifications and invitations to bid. After advertising the project in several medias, three local contractors requested a set of specifications and bid forms. Beam Construction Co., W. R. Patton Construction Co. (builders of the church about 24-26 years before the bidding date of the Chapel) and Causby Construction Co. Beam Construction Co. was forced to drop out at the last minute due to a change in Contract Bonding regulations which made it impossible for Beam to make a proposal. It was learned informally that Beam had completed their proposal to bid when they learned they were ineligible, and that they would not have been the successful bidder if they had posted a proposal. The two bidders who made bids were tabulated as follows:

<b>Bidder</b>	<b>Bid Bond</b>	<b>Base Bid</b>	<b>Tower*</b>	<b>Plumbing**</b>	<b>Bid Total</b>	<b>Time</b>
Patton	5%	\$330,000.00	\$9301.00	\$750.00	\$340,051.00	244 days
Causby	5%	\$256,656.00	\$2656.00	\$656.00	\$259,968.00	240 days

\*The bell tower price was requested in order that the tower donor could be quoted the cost.

\*\*The plumbing cost was quoted in order that the plumbing could be paid for from separate funds, as it involved installation of a supply line and drain from the classroom area on the second floor of the Kistler House.

When the proposals were fully understood by the members of the Building Committee present at the bid review, the chairman asked for a motion on the matter. Mr. Clayton Braswell made a motion that the contract be awarded to Causby Construction Company and Mr. Norman England seconded his motion. The contract sum was \$259,968.00 to build the Chapel, the Bell Tower and the miscellaneous plumbing in the Kistler House second floor. The six members present with all voting aye; the other committee members were reached by phone by the Chairman and all voted aye, making it a unanimous vote. Therefore, the church family was asked to consider the matter in conference and the vote to proceed was unanimous. The contract specified that work should start as soon after May 6, 1987 as possible.

On May 7, 1987 the Building Committee had this to say on the subject of the beginning of construction: "Heavy work, i.e., trucks, cranes, etc., will be rolling across our lawn very soon. The first work will be the removal of the Sun Room from the Kistler House. It may be quite difficult to walk safely near the site of construction. Also, in case of rain it will be muddy. The builder has placed several barricades in the site and all are urged to respect these barriers. All of our members are asked to walk a little bit out of their way in order that this may be a safe project."

The Contractor is on record as requiring 240 days to complete the work. Unofficially, the job superintendent "guessed" that it would take no more than half that much time, or about 120 working days.



The report ended with a request for the patience and good will of all of the membership and for the prayers of all for a safe and successful project.

While the job was not done in the agreed upon time, there were conditions that made it inadvisable to contest the builder for taking extra time. While there were no extraordinary problems encountered, the contractor was embarrassed by the sudden resignation of the job superintendent and the works foreman. The two men joined with some other people to form a new construction firm. No one suggested that this defection by the two key men made a difference in the end result. In fact it is possible that the overall quality of the work and the time required for the job were bettered by the return of Mr. Causby as superintendent and job manager. All persons concerned with the outcome of the job beginning with Pastor Shepherd, the Building Committee, and the membership in general were greatly pleased with the final result.

Mrs. R. O. Huffman and Mr. Tom Cornwell who added significantly to the Building Fund provided by the sale of Mrs. Minnie Reddish's house were also quite pleased with the results. It is worthy of note that Mrs. Huffman was heard to say that, whereas her husband, Mr. R. O. Huffman had often expressed the hope that he would live to see the new church completed, she had for a long time prayed that she should live to see the Chapel completed and in use. Both of them lived to see their wishes come true.

The contents of the program of dedication of the Chapel and the Bell Tower have been reproduced for inclusion in this portion of our history. This program is included in the book of memorials on display in the glass top book shelf in the Chapel Narthex. So far as is known this list of donations is inclusive of the generous donations made to complete the furnishings and the interior decorating of the Chapel, and the exterior appointments of the building. The Architect's Statement was supplied by Mr. Stuart in response to our request that he make such a statement to enable all of our membership to understand his motivation in the creation of the various design elements that were combined to create such an extraordinary result.

Again, the Building Committee on behalf of the Pastor and entire staff of the church and the total membership express sincere appreciation to all of those persons who have given of their talents and their funds to make the plan materialize in the beautiful and useful structure that is The Memorial Chapel.

We incorporate the beautiful poem adapted from Psalm 148 as a gentle and constant reminder of the Source of all our blessings.

## OUR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SOURCE OF ALL BLESSINGS

*Praise the Lord! ye heav'ns, adore him;  
Praise him, angels, in the height;  
Sun and moon, rejoice before him;  
Praise him, all ye stars of light.  
Praise the Lord! for he hath spoken'  
Worlds his mighty voice obeyed;  
Law which never shall be broken  
For their guidance hath he made.*

*Praise the Lord! for he is glorious'  
Never shall his promise fail;  
God hath made his saints victorious;  
Sin and death shall not prevail.  
Praise the God of our salvation!  
Hosts on high, his power proclaim;  
Heav'n and earth and all creation  
Laud and magnify his name.*

(Words anonymous, adapted from Psalm 148)

## THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Today we celebrate a dream come true for our church family with the dedication of the new Memorial Chapel. The building is open for your inspection and we are sure that the building will speak for itself. And we believe that a few comments on features of the Chapel are in order.

**THE ARCHITECT:** The firm of Robert B. Salsbury Associates, P.A. furnished the plan, with Donald R. Stuart as Project Architect. Mr. Stuart visited the work almost every working day and provided excellent coordination of effort of the Contractor and his sub-contractors.

**THE BUILDER:** The Contractor was Causby Construction Co. of Morganton, N.C.

**THE BUILDING:** We asked Don Stuart for a brief statement of facts that could be incorporated into a statement to describe just how he arrived at the plan for the building. His statement is a part of this program. We included it for your information.

**STAINED GLASS:** The fifteen stained glass windows are reminders of our old church home on the corner of King and Meeting Streets. These windows were salvaged from the old Church when it was razed two decades ago. Some of the glass dates from 1895 and some from a building addition in the 40's.

**FURNITURE:** Some of the items upon the platform have been housed in our Heritage Room along with other items of historic significance for several years. When the Chapel plans materialized it was decided that these five pieces, three of which date from 1895, should be reconditioned and refinished in an oak color compatible with the organ and the pews and new platform furniture. The Pulpit and the two Clergy Pews are from the old church. The two chairs are reproductions designed and built by Mr. Carl Brittain to match photographs of the originals which were lost in the rush when a large number of old pieces were sold. Mr. C. C. Harrell spent a great deal of time and effort to trace the lost chairs but to no avail. The 18 pews, the communion table, the lectern, the narthex memorials display case and the guest register shelf were all provided by Kivett Co., Inc. of Clinton, N.C. Several firms were asked to submit proposals and the Kivett proposal was considered best. They were one of the two firms who provided a representative sample. And, while church pews are generally pretty much the same, there are distinctive differences in our pews and some of the others offered to us. The ends are in tune with the style of our chapel; the relationship between the cushioned seats and the backs is proper for comfort; the representative pledged himself to insist that the factory use highly selected oak lumber, free of knots, mineral streaks and other blemishes, and that all backs would be made of "grain matched" oak boards, all to be in accordance with the sample he provided us, with a tough furniture finish, at a competitive price. We believe we received what we requested.

**THE ORGAN:** The organ is a one manual and pedal reconditioned tracker instrument made and installed by the Reuter Organ Company, Lawrence, Kansas. The instrument is 4 ranks made of 200 pipes. The manual keys are made of maple and rosewood.

**THE PIANO:** This Grand Piano was manufactured by Baldwin, one of the finest makers of pianos in the country.

**THE LIGHTING:** The distinctive chapel lighting was chosen by our architect.

**THE BELL TOWER:** This structure stands as a memorial to Mr. Samuel Henry Fleming, who was our bell Toller for 12 years, 1954-66, and in honor of Mrs. Fleming who lives now in the family home. This bell was cast in 1895 in Baltimore, MD.

**THE CROSS:** The cross on the front facade is known as a Celtic Circle. It is the familiar Roman Cross with a wheellike circle around the intersection of the limbs which denotes eternity.

**MEMORIAL AND HONORIFIC GIFTS:** We include in this program a complete list of gifts, both those in memory of loved ones and in honor of living persons. We believe this to be an accurate list. If in the haste to put this all together we have omitted any gift, please notify us so the record may be corrected.

First Baptist Church  
Building Committee

**"...A decree to build this house of God."**

**Ezra 5:13**

The funding for the Memorial Chapel came from three principal sources: The estate of Mrs. W. H. Reddish who served as church organist at the turn of the century and whose husband Rev. Mr. W. H. Reddish once served as pastor of this church, provided a major portion of funds. Today, we honor the memory of Mrs. Reddish. We are inspired by her vision and generosity. Her stewardship was commendable in life and in death as she supported her church and bequeathed a sizeable portion of her estate to her church.

We are deeply appreciative to Mrs. R. O. Huffman who inspired everyone with her strong desire to see a chapel built during her lifetime. Mrs. Huffman gave generously to the chapel fund and has established a fund to maintain and "keep the chapel beautiful" for years to come.

Mr. G. T. Cornwell, life Deacon and faithful church supporter, donated a significant portion of the total cost and gave time and expertise during the planning stages of the project. It was his devotion and generosity which assured us that the chapel would be completed debt free.

We praise God for Mrs. Reddish, Mrs. Huffman and Mr. Cornwell

\* \* \* \* \*

We thank God for the Chapel Building Committee and chairman, Mr. Sam Freeman. Mr. Freeman gave hours and days of selfless service to assure the success of the project.

We thank architects Robert Salsbury and Don Stuart for their efficient and faithful work. We commend our contractor Mr. Paul Causby for his personal interest in the construction process.

We thank God from whom all blessings flow!

**BUILDING COMMITTEE:** Sam Freeman, chairman; John Alexander, Evelyn Berry, Clayton Braswell, Norman England, Dr. Ralph Falls, Jerry Harmon, Jody Hill, Ruth Hogshead, Tony Long, Max Lowery and Boots Tolbert. **EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS:** Bob Shepherd, Fred Schuszler, Bill Rotan, Tom Cornwell, Rene McMahon, Pearl Huffman and Bob Henderson.

**DECORATING COMMITTEE:** Jo Ann Smith, chairman; Betty Day, Evelyn Dees, Mary Ellen Hoffman, Doris Annis, Marilyn Lowdermilk, Bob Hoover and Barbara Lambert.

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH MEMORIAL CHAPEL**

**Gifts, Honorific and Memorial**

<b>DONOR(S)</b>	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>MEMORIAL OR HONORIFIC</b>
The James Black Family Fred Black Family Walton Avery Family James Tolbert Family Charles Gallagher Family Allen Lambert Family	A Chapel Pew	In memory of Mr. James Black, Sr.
Genie and Clarence Bohler	A Chapel Pew	In honor of Rev. and Mrs. Bob D. Shepherd and family
Mr. and Mrs. Clayton Braswell	Candle Sticks, Cross, Flower holders -brass	In Memory of Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Braswell and Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Simpson
Sarah Adams Burrow	Gift for the Ministry	In memory of Mrs. Lillie Adams
The Deaf Department	The cost of reconditioning five items of furniture	In honor of the deaf department members



<b>DONOR(S)</b>	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>MEMORIAL OR HONORIFIC</b>
Mr. and Mrs. Al. J. Dickens, Sr.	A Chapel Pew	In memory of Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Mullis, Mr. W. R. "Jake" Mullis and Miss Pearl Mullis
Mr. and Mrs. Al J. Dickens	Stained glass windows on east and west walls of Chapel	In memory of Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Mullis, Mr. W. R. "Jake" Mullis and Miss Pearl Mullis
The daughter and sons of Mr. and Mrs. Al J. Dickens, Sr.	The Memorials Book Display Case	In honor of Mildred Mullis
Mr. and Mrs. Marion Dixon	The Public Address System	In honor of Rev. and Mrs. Bob D. Shepherd and family
Mr. J. D. Fitz and Mrs. Susan Fitz Rhodes	A Chapel Pew	In honor of Mrs. Lena Fitz
Mrs. Flossie Griffin	A Chapel Pew	In memory of Mr. Joseph Maxwell Griffin
The Harrell Grandchildren Mrs. Diane Bordeaux Mrs. Robin Harrell Mr. Taylor Harrell Mr. & Mrs. John Harrell	Memento Case on the east wall of the narthex	In memory of Mr. C. C. Harrell and in honor of Mrs. Harrell
Charles and Anna Hill	The Cross on the front	In honor of Rev. Fred Schuszler
Mr. and Mrs. Milton Hoffman Mr. L. Carl Ford and Mr. James Ford	A Chapel Pew	In memory of Mr. and Mrs. L. C. Ford
The Huffman Bible Class	A Chapel Pew	In memory of deceased and in honor of the living members
Mr. and Mrs. Fred Korkoske	A Chapel Pew	In memory of Mrs. Faye Korkoske and Mr. David Moyes
The family of Dr. A.M. Lang	A Chapel Pew	In memory of Dr. A. M. Lang
Mother, brothers and sisters of William McFadden	The Chapel Hymnals	In memory of Mr. William McFadden
Mrs. Glynn and James McFadden and Mrs. Ann Roberts	A Chapel Pew	In memory of Mr. Ben McFadden and in honor of Mrs. McFadden
Miss Mildred Mullis	Guest Register Shelf	In honor of Mr. and Mrs. Al Dickens
The family of Mr. Robert Logan Patton	A Chapel Pew	In memory of Mr. Robert Logan

<b>DONOR(S)</b>	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>MEMORIAL OR HONORIFIC</b>
Mr. Edgar Payne and John Payne	The Platform Lectern	In honor of Mr. and Mrs. Earl Payne
Mrs. Max M. Poteet	The Grand Piano	In memory of Mr. Max M. Poteet
Mrs. Albert Prestwood	A Chapel Pew	In memory of Mr. Albert Prestwood
Mrs. Susan Rhodes and Family	The Chapel Bible	In honor of Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Fitz
Dr. and Mrs. James Salisbury	Four Windows in the Narthex Wall	In memory of Mr. and Mrs. James Drew, grandparents of Dr. Salisbury
Dr. and Mrs. James Salisbury	The Bible Window over the entrance	In memory of Dr. A.M. Lang
Mr. and Mrs. Maxwell Saunders	The Bell Tower	In memory of Mr. Henry Samuel Fleming, Bell Toller for 12 years, 1954-66 and in honor of Mrs. Fleming
Mr. and Mrs. Ira Smith, Jr.	A Chapel Pew	In memory of Mr. and Mrs. Ira Smith, Sr.
Mr. Gerald Stephens	The Chapel Organ	In memory of Mrs. J. E. Wilson grandmother of Jean P. Stephens
Mr. and Mrs. Donald Taylor	A Chapel Pew	In memory of Mr. and Mrs. C. M. Watts and Miss Bertie Taylor
Mr. and Mrs. Perry Thomas	A Chapel Pew	In honor of Rev. and Mrs. William E. Rotan and family
Mr. Carl Wall, Sr.	Communion Table	In memory of Mrs. Pansy Wall
Mr. and Mrs. Carl Wall, Sr.	A Chapel Pew	In honor of grandchildren Edward and Jenny Wall - Aaron and April Harper
Mr. Carl Wall, Sr.	The Bible stand	In memory of Mrs. Pansy Wall
Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Williams	A Chapel Pew	In honor of Mr. Jimmy Williams and Mrs. Judy Williams Gooch
Mr. and Mrs. Tom Williams	A Chapel Pew	In memory of Mrs. Flora Cauble mother of Mrs. Williams
Mrs. Beatrice McKinney and Mrs. Joyce Handschuch	Gift of Calligraphy	To complete our record of remembrances

## **Architect's Statement**

The New Chapel is located between the existing three story Christian Education wing and the original Kistler house mansion. Being intimately in contact with both buildings, it was necessary to wed the two with a compatible style. The exterior of the Kistler house is most akin to the Italian Renaissance style, having a tiled simple low hipped roof, facade mostly symmetrical, and two small wings at either end. Details of paladian window, broad roof overhangs and curved entrance head echo Italian influence

The Church Proper is reminiscent of a New England Colonial meeting house design with full height columns supporting a heavy wood triangular pediment and tall slender steeple. The side windows are full height and divided into small lites (window panes). The architect for the church connected the Christian Education wing to the Kistler house with an appropriate Roman arch arcade that is in keeping with Italian Renaissance detailing.

The New Chapel facade is an up-scaled version of the existing arcade and has a round fan transom over the paired entry doors. The various windows and doorways echo various details of the existing buildings. The bell tower is a series of four arches placed on a stepped pedestal and capped with a low hipped roof similar in shape to the Kistler house roof and finished with shingles to match the Christian Education wing.

The inside of the Chapel is a simple intimate setting designed as a quiet space that incorporates nostalgic pieces of memorabilia of the Church's history. Simple exposed beams project a straight forward honesty of structural strength. The cross window and side windows at the altar, with the tinted and textured glass, recall the Church's main sanctuary. The antique stained glass windows on each side wall are framed in vertical recesses that accentuate the height of the walls. The stained glass windows in the wall common to the entrance foyer are Church historical gems that receive the renewed attention that they certainly deserve.

There is a wonderful feeling of accomplishment when a designer has been inspired to use his talents to create a space such as this. It is hard to believe that this Chapel has not always been here.

Donald R. Stuart, AIA  
Project Architect

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## **HMONG MISSION BEGINS**

On March 22, 1987 the First Baptist Church and the Catawba River Association initiated a Hmong Baptist Mission. We accepted into our church 38 Hmongs from Garden Creek Baptist Church and the Drexel Baptist Church. Some chose to remain at Drexel Church. Those who joined on March 22, and those who will be baptized will become the Morganton Hmong Baptist Church, (the name is not definite) when the church is duly organized and constituted. Bible teachers are Dr. Andy Lang and Rudy Bell. Lay leaders are Lee Kue and Chou Kue. Bible study and worship will be conducted in the Catawba River Baptist Association building. Initial services will begin on March 29, 1987.

## **WORDS FROM FORMER MINISTERS**

On April 9, 1987 a note was received from Jack and Martha Campbell expressing appreciation for attention given Jack during a time in the hospital. Rev. Knolan Benfield's new address was The Camelot Retirement Home, Granite Falls, NC

## **A SADDENED FELLOWSHIP**

On May 28, 1987 Pastor Bob Shepherd gave this sad news to the church family: "Our fellowship is saddened by the news of the loss of 'my pastor', pastor emeritus Rev. Mr. R. Knolan Benfield. The service of praise on May 19 was the kind of service we shall long remember. It was a tribute to Pastor Benfield and the God he served for many years.

Pastor and Mrs. (Emma) Benfield were regarded as one of the finest, most respected pastor/



wife teams in North Carolina. Now together they enjoy their eternal reward. We thank God for sending them our way."

Bob Shepherd

## **A CENTURY OF LABOR WITH GOD THE WMU**

On August 27, 1987 Mrs. Louise Greene had this to say on the subject of the WMU Centennial: "A century! One hundred years! What is it like to be 100 years old? For the WMU it means a century of women, girls and pre-schoolers involved in Mission Education. It means that the dreams and visions of women who voted to organize a womans missionary society in 1888 have been lived out in each generation down through the century. It means that we, the women still recognize the need for supporting and undergirding the mission endeavors of Southern Baptists as carried out through the Home Mission Board and the Foreign Mission Board. It means that women still pray and give and go; that they still study and do missions.

In celebrating the Centennial WMU takes a backward glance - just long enough to reflect on its rich mission heritage and to reaffirm its mission purpose. We hope you will take the time to view the display in the library window and read the messages, especially the goals for our church in celebrating the Centennial. From the century that has been fulfilled, WMU moves forward into the present with confidence and dreams of a future yet to be fulfilled."

Louise Greene  
Centennial Chairman

## **LETTER TO DEACON CHAIRMAN REGARDING OUR PASTOR SEPTEMBER 11, 1987**

Dear Mr. Braswell:

All of us who work closely with Bob Shepherd have a growing appreciation for his devotion to duty, his healthy spirit of cooperation and his willingness to take on tough assignments. It helps also that he possesses a good sense of humor. On behalf of Baptist College presidents and the Council of Christian Higher Education, I express sincere gratitude to the Morganton First Baptist Church for sharing their pastor so generously with us...His many hours of service and understanding. In that process the good name of your church is written large in the official proceedings of the Baptist State Convention. Thus history will record your generosity and Bob Shepherd's faithfulness during a difficult and important period in North Carolina Baptist life.

We commend First Baptist Church, Morganton for choosing a fine pastor and encouraging him in denominational responsibilities.

Please share this letter with your fellow deacons and with the larger congregation as you have opportunity.

Cordially yours,  
T. Robert Mullinax, Exec. Secy.  
N.C. Baptist State Convention

## **HOLIDAY FESTIVAL NOVEMBER 21, 1987**

The festival was staged to help retire the debt on the Fellowship Hall-kitchen project. A large group of members volunteered to help with the project. In addition to crafts a gigantic yard sale was conducted. The outstanding offering in the sale was a collection of stained glass windows salvaged when the old church on King and Meeting streets was razed more than 21 years before the Festival. An announcement of this sale was in the Church Week of October 29, 1987 which read in part: "Some of the windows date back to 1895 and part of them were installed in a major renovation project in 1949." Mr. Dan Hoyle, a member of our fellowship, and Mr. and Mrs. John

Heilman spent a great deal of time during the 6 months before the festival in cleaning and reconditioning the windows and converting part of them into a variety of art works." At least fifteen of the windows were salvaged for use in the upcoming construction of the new chapel. Between 40 and 50 of the windows were salable as full sized windows or converted to other valuable artistic creations. All of the items put on sale were sold and the total value was in excess of \$6,000.00. The Festival enabled the Church Treasurer to make a substantial reduction in the note to Wachovia Bank.

## **THANKS TO FESTIVAL VOLUNTEERS DECEMBER 3, 1987**

Fred Schuszler and Barbara Lambert who served as coordinators of the festival said "thanks to all" in this letter on December 3, 1987:

"The Holiday Festival was one of those special experiences we will remember for a long time. The purpose of the festival was to raise money to help pay off our note to the Wachovia Bank. What transpired was a wonderful fellowship celebration -- all while accomplishing our main purpose. The festival was a model of what hard work and cooperation can do.

We are grateful to all who participated in any way, especially those who represented their classes at our many meetings and those who staffed the different booths. We must mention the following by name for their excellent leadership:

Becca Moon who worked cheerfully and tirelessly as chairperson for the entire festival.

Charles Gallagher and Mark Hord for their diligent soliciting and creative administering of the silent auction.

David Brown for facilitating the results of the auction with his computer.

Dan Hoyle and his friends the Heilmans (they are now our friends) for their artistry in crafting new stained glass objects and for their expert advice in setting prices for all stained glass items.

Jim Lowdermilk, the Flack Class and members of other classes who rode herd over the yard sale.

Boots Tolbert and the Huffman Class for "russeling" up a hearty breakfast.

To Sarah Harmon and the Serendipity Class for dishing out a delicious lunch.

To Pat Parker and Elaine Barrier for coordinating childrens' classes candy booth.

We all are truly appreciative of every one who supported their efforts and ours."

Fred Schuszler

Barbara Lambert, Coordinators

## **GOD LOVETH A CHEERFUL GIVER**

Pastor Shepherd has never advocated that we stage an annual drive to secure pledges for support of our annual budgets. On November 19, 1987 he reminded us that "God Loveth a Cheerful Giver," in these words: "I have no barrels or buckets. I have no cliches or catchy phrases. I have a simple request and a church offering plate."

"My request is that we make December 6 church gift day. As you know I am very uncomfortable when we are behind in our budget. Your giving to the Fellowship Hall-kitchen project and the Chapel have been good but our budget has suffered. We need an additional \$5,000 to catch up. Would you join me in making an extra love gift on December 6? We have not failed to reach our budget in five years. I am confident that we will not let it happen in 1987. Thank you for joining me in making a special gift to the church. I thank God for you.

Bob Shepherd

## **A DEEP CONCERN FOR PASTOR**

In late October Pastor Shepherd shared with the fellowship his deep concern for the continuing political clouds in the lives of the Christian family in these words: "Many of us are deeply

concerned about recent events at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Our president, Dr. Randall Lolly and the Dean of Faculty, Dr. Morris Ashcraft both resigned. We have in our church five graduates of this fine seminary. We have three of our members studying there at this crucial time.

Values which Baptists have held dear for 300 years are being threatened. These values are:

- 1) Liberty of conscience for every individual.
- 2) The competence and responsibility of each individual.
- 3) The priesthood of every believer.
- 4) The autonomy of local churches.
- 5) The separation of church and state.
- 6) The scripture as the sole authority for faith and practice.
- 7) The right to be free from binding creeds.

Our excellent schools are next on the hit list. They are: Mars Hill, Gardner-Webb, Meredith, Wingate, Chowan and Campbell University. As individuals and as a church we must hold fast to the values precious and to prayer.

Bob Shepherd

## **HALLMARKS OF BAPTIST BELIEFS NOVEMBER 1, 1987**

In his sermon on November 1, Pastor Shepherd cited six Hallmarks of Baptist beliefs:

- 1) Centrality of the Scriptures (our only guide for faith, order and practice.)
- 2) Priesthood of every believer.
- 3) Baptism and Lords Supper are symbolic ordinances.
- 4) The local church is autonomous.
- 5) Local churches are separate from all governments.
- 6) Christianity is spiritual, personal and voluntary.

## **FOOD FOR THOUGHT CHRISTMAS 1987**

Pastor Shepherd gave us these thoughts for consideration during Christmas season 1987.

May the Savior who loves all of us make your Christmas joyous and your new year prosperous.

My heart felt wish for you is taken from Fra Giovanni, AD 1513:

There is nothing I can give you which you have not; but there is much which, while I can not give you, you can take ---

No heaven can come to us unless our hearts find rest in today. Take Heaven ---

No peace lies in the future which is not hidden in the present. Take peace ---

The gloom of the world is but a shadow; behind it, yet within our reach is joy. Take joy ---

And so at this Christmas time, I greet you with the prayer that for you now and forever,  
the day breaks and the shadows flee away.

## **NECROLOGY 1987**

During 1987 the following members were deceased:

Mrs. Louise Dellinger

Mr. David Estes

Mrs. Era Crouch

Mr. Win Berry

Rev. R. K. Benfield

Mr. Boyd Grigg

## **CHURCH MUSIC JANUARY 14, 1988**

This year we have over 150 children involved in Children's Music Program. This program



seeks as its goal to promote spiritual, musical and emotional growth as well as social growth among its participants.

In an effort to recognize those who make outstanding achievement in Choir we are initiating a "super singer" program. Once each quarter a super singer will be selected from each choir. The selection is made by the director and/or workers in each group. Selection is based on achievement and progress in basic skills and spiritual growth, participation and overall attitude.

Super singers for the last quarter are:

Preschool I	Jeannie Lo
Preschool II	Misty Williams
Music Makers I	Meredith Clapp
Music Makers II	Meredith Burns
Music Makers III	Jarrold Dixon
Young Musicians	Lauren Burns

Pictures of these children will be posted on the bulletin board in the hallway. If you see one of these young people, please give them a word of congratulations and encouragement.

## **A NON-SNOWBOUND PASTOR**

**JANUARY 14, 1988**

Pastor Bob in commenting on the faithfulness of the church family had this to say: "About one foot of snow! It was very exciting to welcome about 200 worshipers on Sunday morning. For sure we have a strong, 4 wheel drive, front wheel drive congregation. Needless to say your tenacious faithfulness is noteworthy. The offering was over \$5,000. It is great to be a part of such a wonderful church."

Bob Shepherd

## **YEAR OF THE HOMEBOUND**

This note from the editor was in the same issue as the non-snowbound pastor's note: "The year of the homebound is over. Coordinator Ruth Byrd's year-end report tells of the appreciation and gratitude expressed by the homebound over and over. It was a very good year in which more individuals, classes and church organizations became aware of and involved in supplying the needs of the homebound members. It began (emphasis on began) ties of friendship which cannot be bound by one year or broken as the year concludes. The year of the homebound must not end now that 1987 is history. Our goal was to emphasize our homebound members and their individual needs. Let's continue the good ministry we have improved by last year's campaign. Please continue to remember our homebound members and let them know that they are a special part of our church family. Then every year can truly be 'The Year of The Homebound.'"

## **LEADERSHIP BANQUET**

**JANUARY 16, 1988**

Pastor Bob Shepherd initiated the practice of an annual Leadership Banquet, in the Fellowship Hall at 6:00 p.m. on January 16. All deacons, Sunday School teachers, Committee Chairpersons, and Mission Organization Directors were invited to participate in this very special event.

The banquet was followed by a presentation by Dr. Neil Jackson, a nationally known speaker, author and consultant with the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

## **CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR CHURCH FAMILY**

**JANUARY 21, 1988**

Our Church has met and exceeded our 1987 budget goal by \$5,000. Congratulations are in order but let us not let up in our giving efforts. The budget goal for 1988 is \$418,000 which is a small increase over the 1987 figure. We have a mission to do; let's keep our budget strong to support that mission.

## **DR. A. M. LANG DECEASED**

The death of Dr. A. M. Lang on February 14, 1988 has saddened the church family. Dr. Lang was a faithful servant, having given much of his time and talents as a teacher of young people as well as the Hmong Mission, as a deacon for many years, and a Medical Missionary in Africa during vacation times. Dr. Lang will be greatly missed by this church and in the foreign mission efforts of the Convention.

## **NEW CHAPEL DEDICATION**

**MARCH 27, 1988**

Members and friends of our church are invited to the dedication exercise of our New Chapel and Bell Tower on Sunday, March 27, 1988, during and immediately following the morning worship hour.

## **YOUTH MINISTRY**

**MARCH 31, 1988**

Fred Schuszler, Minister of Education, continues to provide excellent leadership for the young people in our church family. This description of a service project illustrates the sort of experiences to illustrate this truth.

A bus load of our young people spent last Saturday at the Broyhill Baptist Childrens Home in Clyde, NC. We held an exuberant birthday party for the more than fifty residents of the home. We gave each member a present, played games and served refreshments and birthday cake. This was followed by a tour of the facilities. (One of our number called it an eye opener.)

Special thanks to Kendall Barrier for driving our bus and to trip counselors Sarah Harmon, Lise Black and Elaine Barrier.

This was an unselfish, well planned ministry opportunity. We are proud of all who participated.

Fred

## **HANDBELL FESTIVAL**

**MAY 1, 1988**

The fourth annual handbell festival was announced for April 30 and May 1 in our church. Churches participating were First Baptist, First Methodist, First Presbyterian and Grace Episcopal all of Morganton, and First Baptist of Drexel. The guest clinician and conductor was Mr. Richard Litterst of the Second Congregational Church, Rockford, IL. Mr. Litterst is an authority in bell ringing. He brought his own group through Morganton last summer.

## **MIRACLES IN THE SANCTUARY**

**MAY 12, 1988**

Pastor Shepherd delivered a beautiful sermonette in his note to the church on the subject of ones feelings when he enters the sanctuary in a worshipful frame of mind. He first quoted a short poem by Angela Morgan to set the state for his treatment of the subject of Miracles in the Sanctuary.

Only a step from the road,  
    A league from the toilsome town -  
But oh, what hands to lift your load,  
    What splendor streaming down;  
Only a step from the street  
    and troubled ways of men;  
Yet here may God and mortals meet  
    And Christ be born again.

When you enter the sanctuary, sense a presence. God is ever present, but in His house you should ever feel, as if it were, the touch of His hand. The therapy of knowing that He cares should heal the bruises of life's battles. The symbol of the Communion table should remind you that His love is costly and is unquenchable.

When you enter the sanctuary, see a vision. Don't forget to recall what you were and might have been. Then grasp a glimpse of what you can become. See the star, set your course and then sound your praise.

When you enter the sanctuary, seal your vows. Turn from the feverish sickness of revenge, passion and greed. Feel the refreshing showers of blessings in a change of climate which revives and produces new life. In the presence of God and assembled witnesses, make those vows which you are directed to make because you have sensed a presence and may have seen a vision.

You will be thrilled beyond words when you become a part of the miracle of the sanctuary.

I hope to worship with you in our sanctuary this Sunday morning.

Bob Shepherd

**JEANETTE AND FRED**  
**MAY 28, 1988**

All members of our fellowship were invited to a reception celebrating the marriage of Jeanette and Fred Schuszler on May 28, 1988 in the Fellowship Hall at 2:00 pm following a private wedding ceremony in the chapel.

The Schuszlers promptly acknowledged the reception marking their marriage in these well chosen words: "The wedding reception was a culinary masterpiece, a decorating work of art, a lively party, a festive fellowship time and a most memorable occasion. It was most of all an exceptionally wonderful expression of love and support from an exceptionally loving and supportive Church Family.

Special thanks to Barbara Lambert and Betty Day for their beautiful decorating and coordinating touch and to Rene McMahon for the delicious and elegantly displayed food, and the 'cast of thousands' who donated flowers, time, talent, effort and affection to this gracious gift.

We do love you - each and all and will remember your generosity and kindness as long as memory remains with us."

Fred and Jeanette

**EXTRAORDINARY**  
**YOUNG BAPTISTS**

The First Baptist Church can be thankful and proud of the excellence of these young people as reported in the Church Week on June 22, 1988:

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Elisabeth Black - | Received the National Junior Honor Society Award for outstanding seventh grader.   |
| Traci Caroway -   | Received the Thomas Howard Brothers Award; the Presidential Academic Fitness Award; the Top Ten Academically in 9th Grade; maintained highest average for 3 years at Morganton Junior High School. |
| John Woodell -    | Received Presidential Academic Fitness Award; was in Top Ten academically in the 9th Grade and second highest average for three years in Morganton Junior High School.                             |
| Anna Bridges -    | Was in Top Ten academically in the 8th Grade.  |
| Nicole Bridges -  | Was in the Top Ten academically in the 7th Grade.  |
| Tom Spiggle -     | Received scholarship from Morganton Lions Club and from the Huffman-Cornwell Foundation. He was one of 25 Freedom High School honor graduates and was named as best speech student.                |
| Kristin McCurry - | Served as Freedom High School Junior Marshall for 1988.  |
| Jeff Farrar -     | Won Eagle Scout Award from Boy Scouts of America. He refurbished   |



	the playground at First Baptist Church. He and Troop 180 members moved equipment from the old playground area to the new area and landscaped the grounds.
Scott Black -	Received National Honor Society Scholarship Award.
Kevin Robinson -	Received the Wilson Collette Award and Reserve Officer Athletic Award.
Leo Snow -	Selected as winner of the N.C. Business Award for social studies for North Western Region. He is now in the running for the State Wide Award.
Hugh Hawley -	Named as best student in literature.

## **OUR WALKING PASTOR SEPTEMBER 22, 1988**

The Church Week printed this note from Bob Shepherd: "Sunday's walk for world hunger exceeded expectations. For the first Burke County walk the participation was phenomenal. With a goal of \$12,500 the last figure exceeded \$2,000. We had over 450 walkers and many workers. Our church had 70 walkers plus. Thanks!! I had 29 sponsors, walked 10 miles in two hours and 20 minutes and at present have \$1,670 given by sponsors. (All funds are not in yet.) I sincerely thank my sponsors and appreciate all workers and walkers from our church!"

## **PASTOR URGES ALL "SUPPORT OUR GLOBAL VILLAGE"**

On October 13, 1988, Pastor Shepherd urged Christians to face up to the fact that Christian America's reputation has suffered and the Christian Church could be engulfed in the rubbish. He suggested that the Church must emerge from the trend that seems to have caused us to retreat from the outside world and seek security inside our own four walls. He suggests that the church seek new kinds of ministry, adopt new practices and become more relevant and give less emphasis for serving our own tables and place greater stress on serving the tables of mankind. We could all well adopt the positive attitude of the Psalmist who, when in a fit of self pity lamented aloud this question: "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" The Psalmist finally recovered his faith to proclaim: "Though I walk in the midst of trouble Thou wilt revive me." When Isaiah gloomy in the dark looked beyond the confusion of his day and responded to God's call saying, "Here am I - send me."

Pastor Shepherd's conclusion was an admonition in a familiar hymn: "Rise up O men of God! The Church for you doth wait. Her strength unequal to her task; Rise up and make her great!" The call if we are to be responsible citizens of the "global village" we call planet earth, and responsible ambassadors of Christ's Kingdom.

## **AGAPE CLASS AUTUMN BAZAAR**

The Agape Class, ever mindful of the continuing unpaid obligation at Wachovia Bank, staged a Fall Bazaar with commitments to help from several other adult classes. The date set was November 12, 1988. The Huffman Class began the day by serving a bountiful breakfast at a reasonable price. The breakfast for which the Huffman Class men have become deservedly famous got the day off in grand style. Other classes offered crafts, baked goods and canned foods from gardens and fruit trees.

The result of this fine effort was a shopping fund of \$3,049.34 to apply to the debt. The Agape Class and members Barbara Lambert and Alice Smith were applauded for their total class efforts. At the same time, many individuals in a variety of classes were praised for lending their talents and energies in seeing the event through to a successful finish.

## **WELCOME DAVID TURBEVILLE AND FAMILY**

The Church Week editor on December 1, 1988 had this to say upon the arrival of David and family. "Our Deaf Mission is established. We are grateful to have our own minister, David E. Turbeville, his wife Lisa and son Matthew who have come from N. Irving, Texas. Their new address is 100 N. Anderson St. Let's pray for David, Lisa and the new Mission leaders who will emerge from our membership. Already new programs have begun and lofty goals have been set. Our new Mission has the potential of becoming one of the strongest in North Carolina. The Deaf Mission will visit for worship in the Sanctuary on December 4, 1988."

## **PASTOR BOB AT CHRISTMAS IN THE YEAR 1988**

"As of this writing, December 20, it appears that we will meet our budget, exceed our Foreign Mission goals and decrease our indebtedness for capital improvements, by several thousands of dollars. We need \$7,361.32 to meet our 1988 budget. We have given over \$12,000 to Foreign Missions and have given \$6,996.62 to the Building Fund and \$38,815.83 to the budget in December. WOW!!, what a grand way for a great church to celebrate Christmas!!"

## **FIRST NEW MEMBER IN DEAF MISSION**

Emily Vlkojan has joined our Deaf Mission. She joins on profession of faith as a candidate for baptism. Emily is the daughter of Chuck and Brenda Vlkojan. She is nine years of age.

We are delighted to have Emily as the first person to unite with the Deaf Mission upon profession of faith in Jesus Christ as her Lord and Savior. Welcome!

## **NECROLOGY 1988**

During the year 1988 a total of 13 members passed away:

Mrs. Pansy Wall	Mr. Worth Berry
Mrs. Lillie Adams	Mrs. John Crew
Mrs. Hallie McGinnis	Mrs. Frances Robinson
Mr. Randolph Loftis	Mrs. Annibell Smith
Dr. A. M. Lang	Mr. John M. Stratton
Mr. W. A. Lyday	Mrs. Dean Joyce
Mr. Guy Penland	

## **HAPPY NEW YEAR 1989 FROM PASTOR BOB**

With the help of the Church Treasurer, Pastor Shepherd was delighted to announce the following good news: "REJOICE! We gave more than budget requirements in 1988. Our total gifts for budget needs were \$418,400. Missions, Building Funds, etc., gifts totaled \$197,030. So we gave \$615,430 in 1988.

Thanks to God for His unspeakable gift and your gifts beyond words of explanation.

Our Student Sunday worship service was a wonderful experience. All of our young student leaders did an excellent job of directing our worship and beginning a new year. Thank you College and Seminary students. Even if 1989 is no longer our 'Year Of The Student' we will remember you."

## **BUILDING FUND DEBT BALANCE**

The balance on the note for capital expenditures on January 26, 1989 was \$24,900.00.

## **ADMONITION FOR LUKEWARM MEMBERS**

The editor of Church Week suggests that we be not "wheel-barrow members; always having to be pushed and easily upset."

## **THE PASTOR WANTS A RAISE**

Why not? Every one needs a raise. Some march, some strike and some strike out. In any event a raise seems to be a gauge of success, and an attempt to stay in step with progress. Is it not noble to want a raise!

I want a raise in allegiance to Christ on part of 45% of our membership. I want a raise in loyalty to worship by 100% of those members who do not attend. I want a raise in dedication to stewardship; only about 20% of our members tithe. Is it not desirable to raise that percentage? I want a raise in the number of our members who hunger and thirst for righteousness.

I want a raise so much that I intend to march Sunday and state my case.

See you at the regular "sit in" on Sunday at 10:55 AM.

Bob Shepherd

## **CONGRATULATIONS TO MIKE BRIDGES**

In February 1989 the Piedmont Council of Boy Scouts of America awarded its highest honor to J. Michael Bridges. The Silver Beaver Award recognizes exceptional character and noteworthy service. It is unusual to have four members in one fellowship to earn that honor. The other recipients from our church are: Rance Henderson, Ben Hoffmeyer and Bob Smith.

## **REQUIEM APRIL 30, 1989**

An extraordinary musical program was presented in our sanctuary. It was a memorial program in memory of all our membership who have passed away during the past decade. The word requiem is from Latin, meaning "rest". Requiem Aeternum means rest eternal. As a Protestant Requiem this work was written for the survivor, the loved ones, or anyone who seriously wants to understand death as a Christian - - our fear of death, the power of resurrection and our hope of eternal rest. Singers were our own Chancel Choir along with members of the Choir of the First United Methodist Church of Charlotte, NC. Accompaniment were organ, flute, oboe, timpani, glockenspiel, harp and cello.

## **JACK HARWELL TO SPEAK ON APRIL 19**

A special program was scheduled for family night. Mr. Harwell editor of the publication The Southern Baptist Convention Today (SBC Today) was invited to talk to the membership. He led a discussion on the Southern Baptist Alliance.

One of our long range goals adopted in the February Conference was to study the question of our possible affiliation with the Alliance. Pastor Shepherd urged that all members come to hear Mr. Harwell.

## **REVEREND DEWEY HOBBS TO SPEAK ON APRIL 23**

Dr. Hobbs, formerly pastor at the First Baptist Church of Marion, NC, a man with a host of friends in our own church, was speaker at the worship service on April 23. Dr. Hobbs and our pastor have worked together often in Baptist State Convention matters. His current service in the Convention is with the Department of Pastoral Care of which he is Director.



## **GENE PUCKETT, EDITOR OF BIBLICAL RECORDER**

Mr. Puckett was invited to speak to our fellowship on April 26. His subject was State Missions. He also came to gather data on our Hmong and Deaf Missions for use in a Recorder story in the near future. Pastor Shepherd urged all members to be present "for a special program by a special person."

## **HANDBELL FESTIVAL FIVE**

The fifth handbell festival was held in our sanctuary on Sunday, May 7, 1989. Participants were: First Baptist Church, First United Methodist Church and First Presbyterian Church. The guest director was Rev. James Salzwedel of Christ Moravian Church, Winston-Salem, NC.

## **GREAT NEWS BY BUILDING FUND TREASURER MAY 7, 1989**

Building Fund Treasurer Clayton Braswell made this announcement on May 7, 1989: "Our Building Fund note balance due is now \$10,500. I know that you share my eagerness that we soon end this indebtedness. I believe we can make the final payment by August 1.

One of our members has issued a challenge gift of \$3,000 if we can raise the remaining \$7,500 by August 1. Let's accept the challenge and give the amount required by August 1.

If you have made a pledge for 1989 try to complete your pledge by the end of July. If you have no outstanding pledge but wish to see the debt retired by the end of July, please make your gift by July 31."

Clayton Braswell

## **FROM PASTOR BOB MAY 7, 1989**

We have had a lot of exceptional experiences in our church recently with a lot of exceptional people to thank.

Our first Better Homes Club meeting of the year lived up to its fine reputation. Guest speaker, Dewey Hobbs, gave a thought provoking personal and inspirational presentation on an important issue. The food was delightfully served and was delicious. The oriental atmosphere unique and beautiful. The fellowship fun was great. We are grateful to Presidents Steve and Nancy Bailey and the entire hard working Better Homes Club leadership for planning and producing this special event.

The Chancel Choir Requiem Memorial Service was a most meaningful event. It provided a needed opportunity to reflect upon our hope in Christ in the face of death and chance to remember those from our church family who have now gone to be with Christ. Bill Rotan, Linda Faulk and our great choir along with the First United Methodist Choir and the instrumental ensemble which included "our own" Jeanette Schuszler, are to be commended for the brilliance of this performance. Our Music Ministry has worked very hard on this program and we are grateful for their "labor of love."

Our Church Handbell Choir is to be commended for their stirring performance and leadership role in the fifth annual Community Handbell Festival held in our sanctuary last Tuesday evening. We appreciate their commitment and their lovely contributions to worship throughout the year.

Before our family program winds down for the summer let me also take this opportunity to thank all of the many people who have served in leadership positions in the childrens' choirs, meal preparation and cleanup, mission organizations and youth studies. We truly could not do it without you. Thanks for a big job well done.

## **MRS. FOUTS RESIGNS**

On May 18 the Church Week editor issued invitations to all of the membership to a reception honoring Mrs. Sharon Fouts, Preschool Director of our church on Sunday, May 21 in the Fellowship Hall. Mrs. Fouts will move with her family to Raleigh in June. Mrs. Fouts has given us eleven good years of service. She will be succeeded by Susan Searcy an experienced and highly qualified director of our preschool department.

## **THANKS,**

## **PASTOR BOB SHEPHERD**

**MAY 18, 1989**

I am currently celebrating my eighth year as Senior Minister of First Baptist Church of Morganton. The Deacons have instructed me to release the following statistics. They give only a numerical idea of the genuine achievements we have accomplished in seven years. I have been proud of the real growth we have achieved as a church and pleased to have served as a catalyst for that growth.

However, I do not see these as my statistics. They are merely a good indication of the wonderful work of the Lord among us using an excellent ministerial team, a dedicated support of the staff and a loving, giving, eager to grow church family.

Let's give the glory to God and take a humble and happy bow ourselves and then get to work accomplishing further good for Christ's kingdom in the days ahead.

	<b>1982</b>	<b>1989</b>
Membership	1204	1475
Receipts	\$278,838	\$749,700
Sunday School	653	1077
Music	149	266
Cooperative Program	\$23,500	\$46,037
Missions	\$48,600	\$87,637

## **YEAR OF THE YOUNG FAMILY**

Meet the Dixon family, Marion, Sally and Jarrod (age 10). They enjoy hiking, fishing and field trips together. At home they play cards and board games, as well as working on the computer. Family get togethers with extended families of both Marion and Sally are important events. The Dixons have had several events recently. Marion and Sally celebrated their 15th Anniversary. Marion has also been certified recently by the N. C. Alarms Licensing Board.

Meet the Bennetts, John, Joan and daughters Lindsey age 7, Carrie age 3 and Emily age 3. The Bennetts are a new addition to our church family, but are already very active, with John teaching a newly formed Sunday School class and Joan teaching our Grade 2 class. John was honored recently as Glen Alpine's Man of the Year. The Bennetts enjoy hiking and picnicking together as well as games and reading books together.

Meet the Parkers, Andrew, Harriett and their children, Elizabeth age 10, Michelle age 9, and Andy age 3. The Parkers live in Glen Alpine. They have a pet dog named Cindy. The Parkers enjoy going on trips and recently had a family outing at Linville Falls. They have been hard at work planting a family garden and are looking forward to fresh vegetables this summer.

## **ADULT SUMMER BIBLE STUDY**

On June 1 the Church Week announced that Adult Study would be held on July 13, 14 and 15, with Dr. John Hewett, Pastor of First Baptist Church, Asheville as teacher. His topic will be The Sermon On The Mount.

## **BUILDING DEBT PAID!**

On June 22 the Church Week headline read BUILDING DEBT PAID!! The Pastor commenting on this said: "It is a relief being out of debt. It is a miracle what this congregation has accomplished during the past few years. The Fellowship Hall renovation, the New Kitchen, a Chapel and renovations to Sunday School quarters on the second level of the Sanctuary, would all together amount to about \$1,000,000.

## **SPRING AND SUMMER CRUISES**

The Church Family as an expression of love and appreciation sometime ago presented Bob and Dolores a gift of money to take a cruise to mark their fifth year as our pastoral family.

On June 22, 1989 Pastor Shepherd made a report on the proposed cruise in these words: "The cruise money given to Dolores and me has been stretched (earned interest) to afford several mini-cruises. The trips have reached from Southern Pines to Franklin, NC and Boone to Orlando, FL. We chose not to go on the big boat at this time. The little trips all have been most enjoyable and we are deeply appreciative.

When you gave the generous gift two years ago you made no restrictions. You did suggest that we take a cruise. Time and schedules have not allowed that but the short excursions have been wonderful. Dolores and I want to say thank you.

Bob Shepherd

## **ADULT BIBLE STUDY FINAL PLANS JULY 2, 1989**

As previously announced, the adult Bible study schedule was listed in Church Week. The July 13 and 14 hours were 7:00 - 9:00 pm and the July 15 hours were 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Pastor Shepherd had this to say on the subject: "Our annual adult summer Bible study is always a special experience in our church year. In past years we have hosted some of the finest Bible teachers in America. This year is no exception. Dr. John Hewett, pastor of First Baptist Church in Asheville will be our study leader. He will be guiding us in our Lord's powerful Sermon on the Mount found in Matthew's Gospel.

Dr. Hewett gave the Convention sermon at last year's Baptist State Convention. He has served as featured speaker for many conferences at Ridgecrest; for conferences sponsored by state conventions of N.C., Missouri, Georgia, Florida, Tennessee; and as leader for conferences sponsored by the Sunday School Board, Christian Life Commission and Church Training Department. He has taught in both Southern and Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminaries.

We are looking forward to studying and fellowshiping with Dr. Hewett on July 13, 14 and 15.

I encourage you to be present and bring a friend.

Bob Shepherd

## **CONGRATULATIONS REV. BILL MARTIN**

Rev. Mr. Martin received an award from the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention in recognition of his service as Chaplain. Bill served as Broughton Hospital's Chaplain for 29 years and 9 months. He is now in retirement from Broughton.

## **TRAVEL TO EUROPE**

Our church group attending the world famous Oberammergau Passion Play and exploring the high lights of Europe is filling up. We have eight more spaces and if you would like to see this



thrilling play, visit some of our Christian heritage in England, travel Germany's Romantic Road, wander the streets of Venice and see the beauty of Lucerne -- well, see Bill Rotan for more information and a brochure. This is for adults.

## **HUGO REFLECTIONS: BY PASTOR**

From coastal area to the foothills Hurricane Hugo has made a huge impression. True, damage here is little compared to the coast line of South Carolina and North Carolina. We did know that Hugo paid a visit.

It is Friday, September 22, 9:30 a.m. There is no electricity at the church. I sit in my dim office reflecting. I'm exhausted and wet. No one is here. No telephone service. (I'm sure the staff will appear later.)

It was dingy dark when I drove into the parking lot. Large tree limbs obstructed the entrance. I moved many limbs and parked near the entrance. The church building was awesomely lonely without lights or people.

Upon examining the roof area I noted that several shingles were blown straight up and nearly off the chapel. I climbed on the roof and tucked them back. On the portico green limbs and leaves had clogged the drains. Forsaking shoes and socks I cleared the broken and blown debris and water gushed down the gutter from the flat flooded surface.

All of the windows in the sanctuary had collected ponds of water on the sills, which is to say that Hugo's blowing rains found a way to enter even the smallest openings. I soaked the water up and dried the newly painted ledges.

I am still alone. I don't notice the tiredness. When will help come? I think about our shut-ins, our sick, our high wind and low wind budget, our needed programs, and the sanctuary is still empty and dark.

I'm sure I will be fine when some one comes to help. Meanwhile, I have learned that in storms a pastor can feel slightly tired, a little scared and very much alone.

## **CHURCH CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS OCTOBER 4, 1989**

The church voted to have our records audited biennially by our own Audit Committee, with a professional audit at the discretion of the Committee.

The church approved a Ministry budget of \$496,015 for 1990. This amount does not include extra or designated gifts to special mission projects. For example we budget \$1,800 for BUCM but average giving to that agency runs \$3,000 to \$4,000 per year. The \$496,015 does not include Building Fund, Preschool or other non-budget projects.

The 1990 Ministries Budget includes:

Missions and Evangelism	\$ 66,500
Special Missions	\$ 19,000
Local Programs	\$ 36,095
Operations & Maintenance	\$126,300
Personnel Services	\$248,120

The Church voted to accept as a goal a three year \$160,000 Capital Improvements plan. The plan would be financed through the Building Fund but no money will be borrowed without the approval of the church family.

Copies of Capital Improvement plan and 1990 Ministries Budget are available for inspection in the church office.

## **HOLIDAY FESTIVAL NOVEMBER 11, 1989**

The Church conducted a Holiday Festival on Saturday November 11, from 8:00 a.m. until

2:00 p.m. Proceeds were to be added to the Building Fund debt. These were the features of the Festival:

Breakfast 7:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.  
Yard Sale  
Candy Booth  
Artistic Crafts  
Baked Goods  
Garden Canned Goods

Lunch 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
Baptist Bar  
Silent Auction  
Holiday Notions  
Rent a Youth Service  
Face Painting

## **NECROLOGY**

During the year 1989 fifteen of our members passed away.

Mr. Waverly Hyman	Mr. Milton Hoffman
Mr. E. C. Denton	Mrs. Ruby Prestwood
Mr. Jim Smith	Miss Ann O'Brien
Mrs. Pearl Duckworth	Mrs. P. W. Wellman
Mr. George Brown	Mr. Carl Wall, Sr.
Mr. John Cantrell, Sr.	Mr. George Matkins
Mr. George Clarke	Mrs. Frances Shirley
Mrs. Evelyn Greene	

## **SALT AND LIGHT**

An ecumenical service of worship was scheduled for all participants in the Morganton Ministerial Association at our sanctuary on January 4, 1990. The purpose of the gathering was the celebration of our unity in diversity and our common commitment to be "salt and light" in our community. A reception with light refreshments followed the worship time.

## **BUDGET OVER SUBSCRIBED**

I can not describe my apprehension as we approached December with a budget deficit of \$13,057.37. Because of Southern Baptist Convention tensions, I was also deeply concerned about our meeting a meager \$12,500 Foreign Mission budget goal by January 1, 1990. The final report spelled "relief" - we went over budget and over goal!

During the month of December our fellowship gave \$55,241.84 for budget causes and \$8,800 for Foreign Missions, plus a significant amount given by Sunday School Classes for benevolent causes.

I deeply appreciate all who gave. Some gave with sacrifice. Several who gave generously were determined that we would not fail to meet the budget and missions goal. I can not adequately express appreciation to them and to all who regularly support our church and programs.

It's good to be your pastor.

Bob Shepherd

## **A BETTER AND LONGER LIFE**

### **FEBRUARY 1, 1990**

Pastor Bob in the Church Week had this to say on the subject - "When it comes to a matter of life and death we should give serious attention" Please note the following words:

"John Hopkins University has done a study of 100,000 residents in their general area. It was determined that the death rate of those who did not attend church was 900 per 100,000 while the rate for attenders was 500 per 100,000.

The conclusion to be drawn is obvious. Persons who take time for church have learned to

manage their schedules. They refuse to drive themselves seven days a week. They have learned to receive spiritual and emotional strength from hymns of praise, scriptures and fellowship. They receive guidance, hope and confidence from church attendance. The persons who take time for church have learned that the abundant life which God has given in His Son, our savior, works for a better and longer life. And regardless of the number of days lived, there is a fullness and meaning to be found in no other place.

Let's worship together Sunday."

Bob Shepherd

**MELVA HYDER IN  
MEMORIAM  
FEBRUARY 22, 1990**

The church staff and membership of the First Baptist Church were greatly saddened by the untimely passing of Melva Hyder on February 22, 1990 in an automobile accident. The paraphrase of Proverbs 31 in her memory is appropriate for inclusion in the church record of history. This fine adaptation was prepared by Fred Schuszler, Minister of Education, First Baptist Church, Morganton, NC.

It is wonderful to find a great woman who is a loving wife, special friend, and a dedicated church leader.

She is far more precious than jewels.

The heart of her husband trusts her, and he knows that he is indeed a fortunate man.

She does him good, and not harm all the days of her life (even if she sometimes kicks him under the table to stop him from telling a joke).

She seeks ways to be of service and works willingly and cheerfully. (She paints around the windows, just because she knows that's the job nobody else wants.)

She is a true partner with her husband in volunteering her time and helping others.

She gets up early and gives herself throughout the day and others can depend upon her to "be there".

She is a responsible, trusted steward of the Lord's money. She's careful with limited resources, and works diligently to see that they are spent wisely, in order to do the most good.

She is a strong person. A courageous person.

She knows that she has gifts to give and puts them to use far past what is expected.

She goes the second mile...and third...and fourth...to help another.

She cares about those less fortunate. She is generous to those in need.

The cold wind of change causes her no fear, for she does all the good she can, while she can.

She is a gracious woman, a beautiful person.

Her husband is respected for similar qualities of giving and serving. They are a good team. She beams with pride when others speak his praise. (Even while "keeping him humble" and making sure praise doesn't go to his head.)

She believes if something is worth doing, it is worth doing well. She likes things neat and orderly. (She chides - in a humorous, friendly way - those of us who aren't always so neat and orderly.)

She is a true lady, with quiet dignity, but knows how to laugh and has a good sense of humor.

She is a wise person, who shares her wisdom in a kind, loving manner.

She is always willing to work, even when burdened with a persistently painful physical problem. One would never know she is in pain.

All who know her call her a blessing. She is loved and respected by children and teenagers, young and old.

Her husband recognizes her worth and says so:

"Many women are exceptional, but you surpass them all."

Charm can be false, and beauty can be appearance only, but a woman who has a strong



faith and expresses that faith in acts of love, is to be praised.

May the good Lord bless her with the fruit of all the good seeds she has sown.

May her many kindnesses precede her as a red carpet rolled up to the gates of heaven.

And as she enters those gates of her God may she hear us now:

Melva, we love you. We appreciate and will always remember all you did for so many of us.

We thank God you lived in our life times and mingled your life with ours.

## **UNANSWERED PRAYER**

Pastor Shepherd addressed the age old question by all who go to God in prayer: why are my prayers not answered?

"One of the Christians most baffling problems concerns 'unanswered prayers.' We tend to become perplexed and at times even doubtful when our earnest prayers seem to have fallen on closed ears. A profound faith should teach that God does hear and He does answer the petitions of His children.

Sometimes answers are 'no,' when the desired answer is yes. We must accept His transcending wisdom as we acknowledge our own limited insight. It may be that we are not ready to receive the answer we desire. It may be that He wishes that we should work with patience in becoming instrumental in accomplishing that which we ask Him to do for us.

God's answer may be so different from the content of our request that we fail to recognize it as an answer. There must be times when God may say no because we would seek something inconsistent with His Divine purpose for our lives.

We must never forget that God does love us. He cares - He always hears the voice of His own and He always answers."

## **WHY I WANT TO BE YOUR PASTOR**

**APRIL 5, 1990**

On April 5, 1990 Pastor Shepherd opened up and proclaimed why - in these words: "You are the kind of people with whom I can be myself. I want to be open, warm and caring. I like to touch lives and you are touchable.

I want a place of service where I can express my profession of faith and not be a professional pastor. Sharing heart knowledge is to me more than sharing head knowledge.

You accept what I believe and believe what you decide to believe. I never want to tell you what to believe. I do want to help you to discover truth and to believe it.

I like serving people who will share in ministry. I don't like doing church work as if it were my job alone. A wonderful staff and a church of ministers make an exciting situation in which work becomes pleasure.

I am called to preach and you accept my efforts. I offer no flair, no flamboyant spectacle, no television appeal nor do I put on a show. I always open my heart to you and find you inside.

You are a peaceful people and I like peace. You are responsive to my mediating efforts when small problems arise. I could not function in the midst of constant bickering. Peace is priceless.

Yours is a grand community in which ministry fulfillment is a challenge. Needs are many. Caring people work to meet the needs. The ecumenical spirit is strong. God's work is done in togetherness.

I want to be your pastor because I must bear witness in my father's name that I believe in Jesus and wish to do His work as 'word made flesh'. You pay me well for my work. God's blessings are even more extravagant -- and eternal. I want to be your pastor because God has led me to you and you to me. What shall I render to the Lord for all of His benefits toward me? I will take up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows to the Lord now in the presence of His people. I thank God for the privilege of serving with you for eight wonderful years. I want to continue to be..."

## **A FELLOWSHIP IN SHOCK!**

On April 26, 1990, the Editor of the Church Week printed this notice: "Most of you know that Bob was hospitalized last week for tests. He was diagnosed as having Trans Global Amnesia. Doctors have prescribed rest and relaxation. After some time off we expect Bob to be back in the office soon."

## **PASTOR BOB'S OWN WORD ON "MY DOWN TIME"**

On May 3 this note in the Church Week made this assessment of his problem. "Recently I have learned that down time is a great time to look up. On May 18 I was in the mountains near Highlands pruning apple trees and it happened. Transient Global Amnesia. I lost 8 hours to a foggy existence to which I shall never return. Simply put, I don't remember pruning trees, eating lunch, going to the hospital, etc. Dolores says I was totally submissive. A deacon said 'No wonder Dolores was concerned.' From Highlands to Grace Hospital to Baptist Hospital it was a down time.

In a new and refreshing way I have learned to look up. I look to God with a new gratitude and renewed spirit of commitment. I have learned to look up to a superb staff and wonderful caring congregation. I have learned to look up to doctors and hospitals and the medical profession in general. Now, I must look up to new routines and revised schedules.

I will still give my best as pastor. In fact, I will be a better Shepherd. My down time has taught me to look up. Perhaps I gave too much time to looking out.

I am eager to see you Sunday."

Bob Shepherd

## **CHURCH CHOIR RECEIVES INVITATION**

In the Church Week of May 10, 1990 a note by Bill Rotan, Minister of Music advised of an exciting invitation to our Choir in these words: "Our Church Choir, (along with several other choirs from several other cities and states) has been invited to sing in New York at Carnegie Hall on next Memorial Day, May 26, 1991. The choir will sing Faure's Requiem, directed by Mr. Marvin Burke of Pfeiffer College.

The event came about through an organization that tries to pull together great artists, performers and choirs of all types from all over the U. S. A. and other countries to sing serious music in Carnegie Hall. The only hitch in this invitation is that we will have to pay our own way. Around 20 singers from our choir have signed up to participate. These 20 persons will pay as much of their cost as they can. However, for many the cost is more than they can come up with on their own. The group has agreed to do things that will generate income for the entire group effort.

So if you hear about a supper benefit for the choir or a yard sale sponsored by the choir this is what it is all about. NEW YORK 1991! I hope you will help when you can. We are proud of this choir -- they are a good group! Let's show them we appreciate their leadership.

## **WELCOME CHERIE MAY 24, 1990**

We are pleased to announce that Cherie Snyder will be our youth worker and Deaf Mission worker this summer. She graduated from UNC Greensboro with a major in Deaf Education. She is the daughter of Winston and Carol Snyder. She was active with the youth program when she was that age. (It seems like yesterday.) Cherie will be working with Fred Schuszler in an exciting summer youth program and will be putting her major educational field to good usage as she assists David Turbeville in our Deaf Mission extensive summer activities. Please support Cherie with your well wishes as you welcome her back home.

## **CHOIR REUNION SEPTEMBER 22-23, 1990**

Under the inspiration and guidance of Stephen Rudicil who grew up in our church, and with the full cooperation and help by our own Bill Rotan, a reunion of Chapel Choir members during the years 1958-1977 who studied under Mr. Jack Campbell was arranged to fall upon the regular annual homecoming observance of the church. An effort was made to communicate with all who sang for Mr. Campbell during these years.

## **HISTORY IN THE MAKING JULY 12, 1990**

In the process of looking forward toward the time when the Southern Baptist Convention would inevitably be shaken to its roots by the ruinous practices of those who have vowed to rule the minds of men and women and rewrite the course of Baptists, Pastor Shepherd urges caution and prayerful conduct as we face that time. On July 2 he expressed himself on the subject in these words: "We are in a history making time. It is scary and challenging. We must be diligent and prayerful.

We must not act in anger. To divert our dollars from the S.B.C. in anger is not christian. We must not seek to make some kind of political statement by withholding our dollars. This kind of weaponry is weak. We must be good stewards. Here is when the history making gets tough.

We are going to continue to support persons and causes we believe in, but we must now look for a new vehicle of giving that does not violate our conscience.

I am working on a plan to present to you which will enable us to make allocations fairly determined and fairly administered by those who give the funds, the way the Cooperative Program used to work. This new history making enterprise will require our sincere prayers and best thinking and our best stewardship."

## **A NEW BEGINNING AND IT'S NOT JANUARY**

On a hot day in mid-July in 1990, Pastor Shepherd as he contemplated the "old trail" ending and the "new one" beginning delivered these comments on what seemed to be the oncoming order of things in the Southern Baptist Convention: "Mid-summer and it's hot! I'm hot! I'm trying to be as cool as a January morning in Morganton because tough decisions are to be made in summer. We can not wait until January. Anyway, a new beginning is necessary when an old trail ends.

Our association with the Southern Baptist Convention will never be the same again. I'm getting excited about new beginnings. It's time for new courage and confidence, loveliness and laughter, peace and prosperity. The Cooperative Program is not holy. The call to missions is holy. I am not going to suggest that we stop giving Cooperative Program dollars. I am going to suggest that we give with careful discretion. We must look for new beginnings in foreign and home missions.

In brief, I am eager for one church to engage in missions and ministries (including evangelism) as we work for Christian unity and reach out in interfaith gestures of good will. It's a new day! The calendar is not calling us to new beginnings...God is. Thank you God for new beginnings.

Bob Shepherd

## **ANNIE S. WALKER DIED ON JUNE 17, 1990**

Mrs. Annie Spainhour Walker a much beloved member of our church who after a very long time after becoming disabled, passed away. We appreciate the beautiful tribute to "Miss Annie" as written by Mrs. Elizabeth Walker who knew her better than any other living person. It is written hereinafter in the exact language used by "Ibby" as she is affectionately known in our church.



## ANNIE S. WALKER

Reading the obituary of Annie Walker when she died on June 17 would mean little to most of the residents of Morganton because she had lived outside the mainstream of life for so many years.

But to those who knew and loved her, her dying was like the fading of a brilliant sunset. By any standard, Annie Walker was a tall woman who left an imprint on this community.

She was truly one of the most outstanding women that Morganton has ever known.

Annie Spainhour Walker was born in Burke County on April 1, 1896, a daughter of Judge Joseph F. Spainhour and Susan Parks Spainhour. She was the fifth of nine children.

From her mother came gentleness and compassion. Her sparkling eyes and warm smile, together with her wit, attracted people to her, and through the years she grew into one of the most outstanding women Morganton has ever known.

Annie was educated in Morganton's public schools and at Women's College in Greensboro (now the University of North Carolina at Greensboro) where in 1916 she earned a bachelor of arts degree.

After college, she returned to Morganton and taught in the city schools, walking the long distance to and from her parents' home off of North Green Street overlooking the Catawba River.

In the spring of 1918, Annie was married to her high school sweetheart, Charles E. Walker, who was on leave from military service only long enough for the wedding, which took place on a Sunday afternoon at the family home.

After a small reception, the bridegroom had to go back to his headquarters at Camp Sevier, near Greenville, SC.

Annie was able to visit him a few times before he sailed for duty in France, where he served for 11 months in World War I.

While Ernest was away, Annie kept busy with school and church work, as well as volunteer work with the Red Cross. Thus she passed the lonely days until Ernest's return in 1919 following the end of the war.

After a brief time, they built a house on North Anderson Street which was their home until they built a second house on Riverside Drive.

While living on North Anderson Street, two daughters were born to them, Ann and Susan. When the girls were old enough for school, Annie became involved in community and volunteer work.

At Grace Hospital, she gave hundreds of hours of her time in Pink Lady work. She also worked as a Grey Lady at Broughton Hospital, helping patients with letter writing and various other needs.

Other community services included serving on the Morganton Board of Education and as a board member of the Morganton Public Library.

She was a longtime trustee of Grace Hospital and served as the board's secretary for a number of years.

In 1956, the Morganton Woman's Club honored Annie for her community service by naming her "Woman of the Year". She was the third woman to receive this honor.

Annie was a charter member of the Friday Afternoon Book Club, which celebrated its 50th Anniversary in 1985.

All of these activities were important to Annie but her first priority was her church. She loved the church and its people and served in several areas of its ministries.

She taught young people in Sunday school for some years and later taught a class of adult women. This class still bears her name and recently the class honored her by providing beautiful new drapes for the church baptistry.

Having a sister serving as a missionary in China gave Annie a keen interest in missions and she worked for that cause. She served as president of the Woman's Missionary society, intermittently, for 12 years.

Annie was a champion for the underprivileged and didn't hesitate to ask for help from

others if she couldn't take care of the need herself. To this cause, she gave unstintingly of herself and her means.

Soon after her husband died, Annie spent almost every afternoon, weather permitting, visiting the sick and shut-ins, bringing them cheer and encouragement.

Now, her good works have faded into the past, but the memory of her person and what she stood for should be recalled. The likes of Annie Walker may not pass this way again.

by Elizabeth Walker

Reprinted from the News Herald

## **ADULT VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**

On August 2 the Church Week announced that the school would be August 7, 8 and 9. Pastor Shepherd was teacher. Time would be 12:00 noon to 1:00 pm. The Topic was "The Priesthood of Believers" as a Christian concept. All three days were based upon the Priesthood as it relates to the current crisis in the Southern Baptist Convention.

## **SPECIAL CHURCH CONFERENCE**

For some time since the resignation of Rene McMahon as Church Hostess, the Food Services Committee has provided excellent service. However, it was unreasonable to expect those persons to continue the extraordinary duty. It was quite evident that the only solution to the problem was the employment of a capable professional food services person to do the job. After one effort to call such a person failed, the Food Services Committee was expanded from three to six persons and another approach was made. For a short while, during the process of seeking a full time professional, a caterer was asked to serve meals for four weeks on Wednesdays. The cost of the caterer was somewhat more than our earlier cost when we were served by a staff person.

In a later conference on September 26 in the Fellowship Hall, the Deacons and the Church Personnel presented a proposal to the conference in seven parts:

- 1) The Church may employ a Food Services Director.
- 2) The Church shall budget \$16,000 annually for this ministry.
- 3) The Food Services shall be increased from three to six persons.
- 4) With the assistance of the Personnel Committee the Food Services Committee shall employ a Director and workers to implement this program.
- 5) The Food Services Committee shall provide management of finances to see that budget support and food services revenues maintain needs of the program.
- 6) The pay range and benefits shall be in keeping with the current market for this position and that the benefits be in keeping with other positions in the church.
- 7) That quarterly operating reports be given to the Deacons and to the church in conference.

## **IN APPRECIATION**

### **BY FRED L. SCHUSZLER**

I appreciate more than I can ever express all of the individuals who planned and contributed time, talent and hard work to making my 10 year anniversary celebration such a delightful occasion.

I was honored and duly humbled by this once in a lifetime event.

I was honored by the "rad" rap puppet childrens' sermon; the handsome plaque, the generous gift, the memory "album" filled with handsome remembrances and moving tributes and numerous personal expressions of Christian love.

I was humbled by the Pandora's box (or should that be a "goody" box?), of bloopers and blunders, mistakes and mishaps, jokes and jabs you opened up (for all to see) on the stage that night. It was an experience I'll never forget. (Unless I get psychiatric help.) It was not a roast - it was a meltdown! With friends like you, who needs Saddam Hussein? (I had better stop or I will sound like John Carter and the "Great Ralph".) Needless to say, you have presented me with an unmitigated mess of humility.

But seriously, folks -- Thank you for this silly and sentimental journey down the past 10 years we have ministered together. The celebration was a warm and wonderful experience, embracing all of the warm and wonderful experiences you shared with me.

Love, Fred

## **CHAPEL CHOIR REUNION CHURCH WIDE HOMECOMING**

On September 23, 1990 two celebrations took place in the sanctuary and on the lawn of the church. The gospel choir reunion was a great homecoming for 75-80 young people who were singers for Mr. Jack Campbell during his tenure as Minister of Music. At the same time many persons who have been affiliated with our church through the years welcomed the chance to come back for a reunion with their families who are still here and old friends still members of our fellowship.

It was a fine homecoming in every sense of the word. By combining the two celebrations each celebration was greatly enhanced. The young "veteran" choir members from the Campbell era sounded extraordinarily good as they sang again for Jack. Mr. Campbell said just before his opening gesture to the choir to get going, "I believed that I was as near to Heaven as could possibly be when they began to sing."

To put it mildly, a good time was had by all who were involved.

## **CHURCH, THE SAFE PLACE TO BE**

Our pastor dwells upon one more reason why we should go to church. "I travel very little by air, rail or water. I am safer because statistics disclose 16% of all accidents occur there. I stay home very little. I am safer because 17% of all accidents happen there. I do not walk the streets very often and I escape another 14% of chances of physical injury. On and on the statistics become very frightening. It has been disclosed that only .001% of all fatal accidents occur in church. WOW! I can't wait to get back to safe church.

However, church is the place where I get hurt most. Only my Christian faith keeps me going to church. That's where I hurt for and with people who exercise the freedom of disagreement. It is a church where I make more mistakes than any other place because that is where my life is centered. It hurts to make mistakes at church.

I am misunderstood more at church than at any other place. I guess it is because I talk more at church. Anyway, misunderstandings and poor communications hurt.

But church is different from the world. Here is where love outlasts everything. Here is where self expression is respected and dissent is dissipated and problems are solved. I suppose if the church were going nowhere there would be no immediate hurt. The long term pilgrimage would be disaster.

I feel safer at church than anywhere. I still hurt. Healing restores me. I still love being your pastor. You and God are my refuge."

Bob Shepherd

## **DEAF BAZAAR SEPTEMBER 27, 1990**

There will be no Holiday Festival this year, but do not despair -- the Deaf are sponsoring a bazaar. If you would like to contribute we will pick up items--no clothes or shoes, please. ALL MONEY RAISED WILL BE APPLIED TO DEAF MISSION SUPPORT.



## **THANK YOU FROM SAUDI ARABIA**

We have received word from our service men, Tim Guffey and Mike Smith. They have been receiving mail from our church folks. They each seem to be doing fine. Tim and Mike said to send the following greeting to you who have written to them. "Your prayers and notes are very heart warming and they appreciate your thoughtfulness. It makes their job a little easier to know how much the folks back home care."

Tim Guffey and Mike Smith

## **NEW FOOD SERVICE DIRECTOR NOVEMBER 11, 1990**

We welcome to First Baptist Church as Food Service Director, Mr. Ben Parham. Mr. Parham holds a B.S. Degree in Hotel, Restaurant, Tourism Administration from the University of S.C. He worked with Morrisons Cafeteria and has done graduate work at Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, VA. November 7 will be Mr. Parham's first family night with us. More information concerning food service will follow in a later Church Week.

## **DEAF BAZAAR NOVEMBER 10, 1990**

Sporting goods, furniture, crafts, Christmas crafts, silent auction will be parts of a fun filled day. We hope that you will come in and do a little shopping for some of your holiday decorations. All money will go to the Deaf Mission for ministry projects.

## **HAPPY BIRTHDAY BOB AND DOLORES**

Sunday November 18, HAPPY BIRTHDAY Bob and Dolores!! High attendance day - Birthday cake will be served from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. in the Kistler Home corridor. He hope you will bring Bob and Dolores your "presence" on this day of celebration before you go to Sunday School.

## **YOUTH MINISTRY**

The young people in conjunction with Burke United Christian Ministries have set a goal of 100 blankets as gifts to help the needy people of our community to keep warm this winter. At the same time each youth will attempt to collect a \$20 contribution from each person to apply to the BUCM fuel fund.

## **THE DECEMBER CHALLENGE**

On December 13 Pastor Shepherd faced up to the grim financial facts we must face as we come to the close of the church year. His summary was made in these words: "This month is moving so rapidly that it is breath taking. Soon Christmas, the end of December and the beginning of the New Year. Before the new year arrives we have to take care of 1990. During the next three weeks we must give \$34,797 to cover our Foreign Missions donation, and budget commitments. If we give \$10,000 as an average each Sunday for the next three Sundays we will have met our budget. Let's do it!!

Our Lottie Moon and Foreign Mission offering goal is \$12,000. To date we have only \$2,984. So we need \$9,016 in mission gifts and \$29,781 budget gifts for the next three Sundays. Let's do it!!

I am eager that our church give more to Foreign Missions than at any time in our history. Remember that \$1,000 of this years offering goes to the Southern Baptist Convention and the

balance will be given to Foreign Missions and missionaries at the discretion of our Foreign Missions Committee. You may be sure that 100% of all you give will go to foreign missions work. Missions is one of the primary reasons for our existence as a church. So, Let's do it!!"

## **SPECIAL THANKS TO CHRISTMAS DECORATORS**

The Editor of Church Week on December 20 expressed the thanks of the entire church family for the extraordinary decorations put in place for the Christmas Season. In a special story he had this to say: "Many people have given an incredible amount of time in helping to decorate our church for Christmas. A special thank you to all who have helped to make the church so beautiful for the holiday season. You are beautiful people."

The editor continued by listing those persons involved in the work:

- 1) Chrismon Committee: Jo Ann Smith, Sandy Hawn, Alice Smith
- 2) Flower Committee: Catherine Farrar, Ella Brown, Betty Day, Barbara Lambert, Jean Stephens, and Deborah Lowdermilk.
- 3) Hanging of the Greens and Door Wreaths: Emily and Bennett Hemphill
- 4) Others who helped: Boots Tolbert, Charles Hill, Mark Lambert, Ken Tugman, Sam Tugman, Brenda Connelly, Jim Hawn, Dan Robinson, Jeanette and Anna Schuszler.

## **YEAR ENDING FINANCIAL NOTE**

In the January 10 Church Week Pastor Bob Shepherd inserted this note, headed up with this title: "In Appreciation for Generosity. We exceeded our operating budget of \$465,015 for 1990. In addition, we gave thousands of dollars (totals are not in) for local, state and foreign missions. I commend you and thank God for you.

Our budget for 1991 is \$478,180. In addition to budget gifts we have a very flexible system which allows any member to give designated gifts. In 1991 I encourage you to give as liberally as possible and to causes in which you have special interests.

You are a great church. I love being your pastor."

Bob Shepherd

## **MUSIC NEWS**

Mr. Bill Rotan inserted this notice in the Church Week of January 10, 1991:

The long awaited work on our sanctuary organ which was approved about one year ago has begun. The Reuter Organ Company is now in the process of putting in a new computerized combination action which will replace a worn out relay system in the organ. We will be without the organ for several weeks, but are looking forward to enjoying a more reliable instrument when the work is finished.

## **NECROLOGY 1990**

During the Church year 1990 the following members of the church family died:

Mr. Homer Biggers	Miss Louise Lane
Mrs. Lucy Browne	Mrs. Sarah McBrayer
Mrs. Mirle Carriker	Mr. Arles Secrest
Mrs. Clara May Carter	Mrs. Patty Thomas Smith
Mr. Kenneth Carter	Mrs. Annie Walker
Mrs. Cecile Cline	Mrs. Lillie Whisenant
Mr. Wayne Dockery	Mr. Ransom Whisnant
Miss Lila Belle Cox	Mrs. Gladys Williams
Mrs. Melva Hyder	Mr. Hartsell Williams
Mr. Bounmee Kue	Mrs. Florence Fairbanks

# **HISTORY OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**

## **THE SHEPHERD YEARS IN RETROSPECT**

### **1982-1990**

The eight years since the arrival of Pastor Bob D. Shepherd on the scene have been productive years. They have not been dull, monotonous, ho-hum years but vibrant, alive and growing times. There have been ample opportunities to serve if one wishes to have a part in what is going on. These opportunities are in both spiritual and temporal areas of the life of the Church. These years have been times of expansion and enlargement. While it is difficult to document everything of a positive nature without repeating all that has gone before, the following summary in brief seems to be what has happened.

There has been a marked increasing awareness of the needs of the deaf citizens of our community. This has resulted in the sharing of the cost of calling a trained pastor for the deaf with the Baptist State Convention. The Deaf membership now worship in the Memorial Chapel as a Mission of the First Baptist Church.

Two major building projects have been started, completed and paid for during these years. When the Fellowship Hall proved to be inadequate to care for the crowds coming to the mid-week services, an increase of about 20% of the space for dining, along with a better area for preparation and serving of food was provided in a new modern kitchen facility.

The provision of a mid-week meal has been regarded as a ministry in making more than 200 to 250 persons able to assemble for a teaching and learning experience. There have been crowds of more than 300 persons served.

After smarting under the political maneuvering of a small crowd of men who have chosen to destroy the way of life that has been the Southern Baptist Convention for many generations, many churches have said "no more"!! Many churches have investigated other associations in which to unite to express their identity as equal partners in a cooperative relationship.

Other churches have sought other ways to distribute funds for foreign missions. Many have adopted the slogan used in colonial America "Taxation without representation is unjust." Our church has opted to withhold funds, applying a small minimum through the cooperative program and disbursing the great majority of funds through a "Missions Committee" made up of the pastor and several other members who are qualified to make such distribution.

Our monthly Church Conferences are conducted under recognized rules of order which makes for a better conduct and more effective end result.

When the influx of Hmong families came to Burke County, Pastor Bob Shepherd and several others in our fellowship recognized this as a chance to establish a very meaningful missionary program, foreign in nature, but close enough to be administered locally. Through the effort of our pastor, Dr. A. M. Lang, Mr. Rudy Bell and Mr. and Mrs., (Lamar and Linda) Campbell and several other persons gave the Mission effort its early life blood. Today they have a potential Mission well under way at the Catawba River Baptist Association building.

Traditionally the Mission effort of Baptists has been largely a woman's enterprise. More and more during the years past, men are becoming more involved and it is largely the influence of Bob and Dolores Shepherd that this has become a trend.

Mr. Shepherd has done a business-like job of delegating responsibility among the ordained ministers. Bill Rotan and Fred Schuszler share the Sunday worship exercises with Mr. Shepherd. They both share administrative duties so that they all have a part in the total management of the Church enterprise.

The children and adults alike get a lot of satisfaction by Fred Schuszler's fine sermons for Children. His use of puppetry to illustrate simple truths is universally appreciated.

The Sunday School enrollment recently exceeded 1000.

The Ministry to Mountain House residents is a very meaningful ministry, carried on by Bob Shepherd and others whom he appoints to share the load.



Meals on wheels has been an ongoing service in Morganton for several years. In recent months there seems to be an increasing awareness of this service and an increased willingness to serve in it.

The importance of rest home, hospital and shut-in visitations seem to have increased in recent years. The membership have good role models in our ordained staff.

In recent months our church has supplemented the allocation of funds by the Convention to the David Long family in Brazil. Mr. David Long is a Burke County native.

While our church has always been youth oriented, the emphasis on young people and their Christian education has been increasingly evident in the years since Mr. Shepherd arrived the attention given to young people in all phases of the church experience seem to have been more positive.

Even though we have had no annual drives to secure pledges of financial support to the total church costs, the response to needs seems to have been possibly better than in the years prior to the arrival of Pastor Shepherd. And, the number of special gifts involving significant outlays of money have increased both for budget causes and for the various extra budget items. Examples of such gifts are the Carillon, the Chapel and the many gifts of property for the Chapel, the Beautiful for the Handbell Choir, and many others.

While we are in our second century of existence as a Church Family, we can safely declare that we are enjoying a second wind and hopefully and prayerfully look forward to the Twenty First Century in God's Service.

On an earlier page it was said that we had come to the end of the part of this history that was taken from the week to week pages of The Church Week. That was on the last day of December 1990. However, shortly thereafter a special honor was accorded to Pastor Shepherd. We believe this merits inclusion in this narrative as it may be many a year before someone volunteers to pick up at that point and continue this history. This item from the January 31 Church Week: **"BOB SHEPHERD CHOSEN 'MAN OF THE YEAR'"**. Congratulations to our pastor Bob Shepherd, who has been selected as Morganton's Man of the Year for 1991 by the Morganton Rotary Club. This is a prestigious honor and we all agree it's an excellent choice!"

In characteristic fashion, Pastor Bob inserted this note in the paper:

**"First Baptist Receives  
Man of the Year Award"**

I congratulate you. You love Morganton and you serve your city with dedication to "Service Above Self". You have a commitment to meet needs outside our white walls. You have a magnanimous spirit which includes all churches and all people of our area...and the world. You allow your senior minister and staff the freedom to serve other tables, and not merely our own. You are great!!

I congratulate you.

Bob Shepherd

Finally, and because it was our intention to conclude this history at the end of the year 1990, we must add one more significant item. At the close of the year, it seemed that we may not fulfill our commitment to Foreign Missions. However, Mr. Shepherd asked that we make up the small deficit at years end. As a result of his recommendation on Sunday, February 10, 1991, the response was a very satisfying over-subscription of the Foreign Mission goal for 1990 by several hundreds of dollars.

This table of data from annual reports recorded in the Annual Directory of the Church provides a record of growth in financial area of our Church life.

Year	Budget	Missions Benevolences	Total Receipts	Value of Property	Cooperative Program Gifts
1972-73	\$128,210	\$38,967	\$226,587	\$1,294,155	\$22,500
1973-74	171,157	32,875	173,607	"	26,000
1974-75	178,747	40,289	174,633	"	24,192
1975-76	195,654	34,925	191,601	"	26,000
1976-77	185,014	32,000	213,274	"	24,175
1977-78	196,744	46,048	234,371	"	24,100
1978-79	207,404	30,000	212,076	"	21,035
1979-80	239,357	36,860	224,779	"	26,450
1980-81	240,988	51,614	238,262	"	23,000
1981-82	247,600	47,278	278,838	1,286,000	22,946
1982-83	304,100	57,800	294,818	2,174,313	23,590
1983-84	339,474	54,529	377,326	2,216,133	30,100
1984-85	369,205	69,892	519,506	2,253,407	35,100
1985-86	409,000	80,566	534,617	"	44,988
1986-87	427,889	84,731	510,426	2,858,887	45,508
1987-88	450,365	85,717	679,988	"	47,371
1988-89	476,090	84,123	664,497	2,999,498	46,037
1989-90	496,015	67,336	583,351	"	42,761

This table of "people" statistics traces our growth in membership and activities

Year	Membership	Resident Members	Baptisms	S.S. Enrolled	S.S. Attend.	Choir Enrolled	Decedents
1972-73	1202	932	16	779	370	236	8
1973-74	1225	956	17	852	383	240	8
1974-75	1235	968	12	807	370	247	4
1975-76	1246	999	19	816	368	267	15
1976-77	1235	924	9	842	355	191	6
1977-78	1212	921	5	740	318	152	4
1978-79	1190	980	11	636	294	179	18
1979-80	1197	887	21	621	291	129	5
1980-81	1206	893	11	660	300	158	12
1981-82	1204	890	9	652	312	144	7
1982-83	1208	896	7	661	330	149	11
1983-84	1274	954	29	782	378	163	6
1984-85	1320	893	27	838	404	196	14
1985-86	1343	998	27	870	410	237	14
1986-87	1401	1052	34	918	407	272	15
1987-88	1432	1065	20	1008	409	266	6
1988-89	1489	1077	15	1038	393	247	13
1989-90	1474	1084	26	1086	415	217	15

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